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THE LONDON QUARTERLY
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BAPTISM

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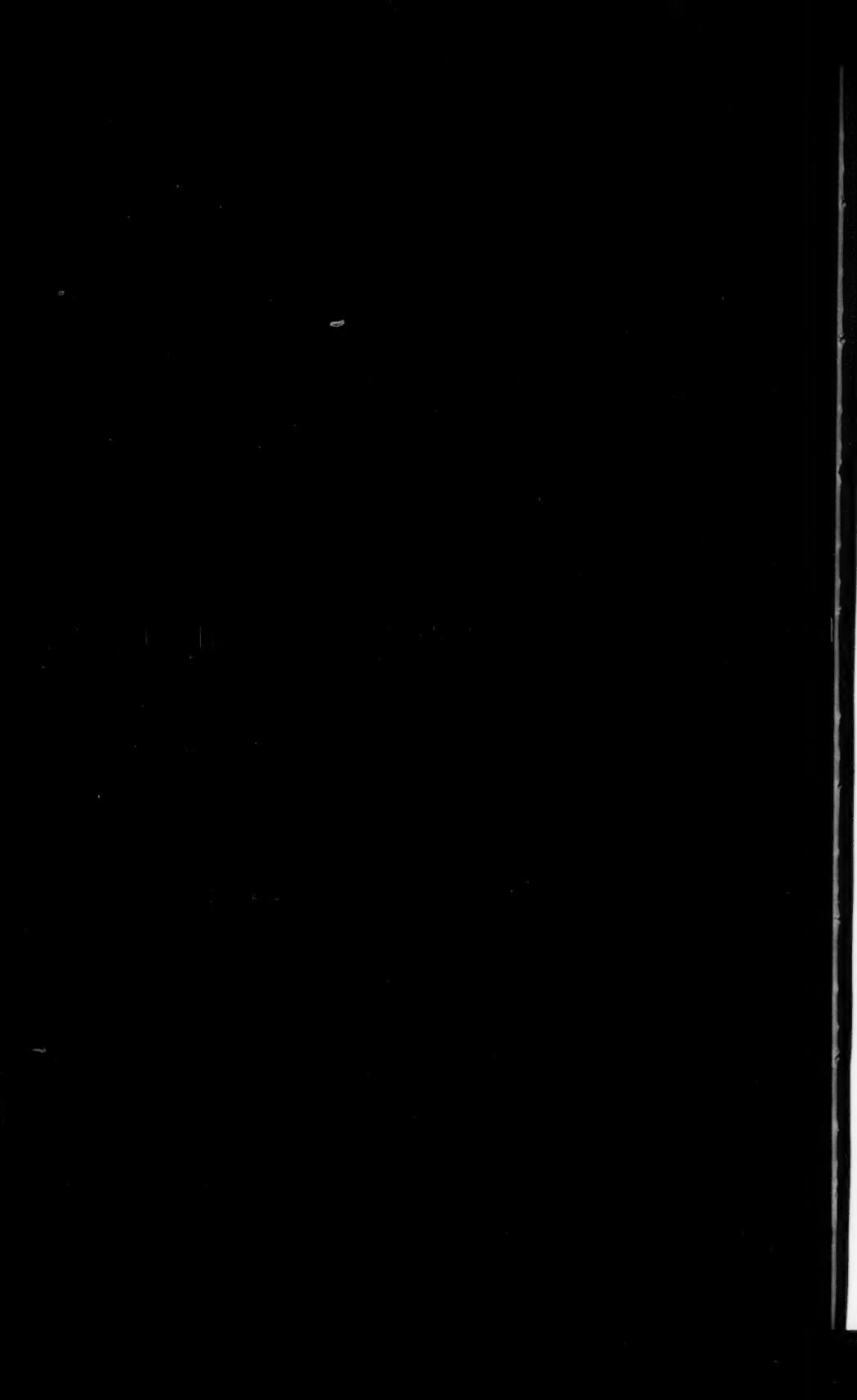
CHILD CARE

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Editorial Comments

HOLY BAPTISM

ONE OF the subjects which has come very much to the fore in Christian thinking in recent years is that of baptism. For a long time, there have been those who have been very uncomfortable about the baptismal practice of the Church. In the days when it was fashionable to be at any rate a nominal Christian, it could no doubt be generally assumed that a baby who was baptized would be given *some* religious instruction—even though perhaps inadequate—at home, would be sent when he was old enough to Sunday School, and from time to time would be brought to church. When, however, the habit of church going became less common, it still remained the accepted thing for parents to have their babies baptized, and it became clear that infant baptism was in many cases no more than a superstition.

The discomfort which the Church felt at this situation prepared the way for an examination of the whole subject, and this desire has been very much increased in other ways. There has been a growth of sects on the periphery of the Christian Church which practise adult baptism of believers; the spirit of unity which has drawn Christians together in fellowship all over the world has resulted in more contact between those denominations which practise believers baptism and those which practise infant baptism, and each side has been learning about and trying to understand the beliefs of the other; and above all, there has been an immense interest in the doctrine of the Church, and that of necessity has carried with it an examination of the doctrine of baptism as the ceremony of initiation into the Church.

Theologians have thrown a great deal of light upon the whole subject, and yet their works sometimes fail to deal with the difficulties which many people actually feel. Even when they do deal with them, the original questions often naggingly survive the answers that have been given. It is clear that the debate is not yet ended. Nevertheless, a great deal of progress has been made, and many things have become more clear. It seems, therefore, a favourable time for a symposium on the subject in these pages. But let us first set out what seem to be some of the main questions and difficulties which many people feel.

There are questions about why the rite of baptism should be used at all. Jesus did not baptize (Jn 4₂); and some doubt is felt whether, in spite of Matthew 28₁₉, He commanded His disciples to do so. Of course He Himself was baptized by John, and so were at least some of His disciples; but John's rite was not Christian baptism and did not signify the same thing (Acts 19₁₋₅), and there is no evidence whatever that the disciples were ever baptized with water into Christ. The rite

can hardly be held to be essential to salvation; it is not practised by the Salvation Army or the Society of Friends, and there are not many who would say that on that account their members are shut out from the Company of the Redeemed; even the Roman Catholics allow of exceptions to the rule that people must be baptized, and say that the baptism of martyrdom, for example, will take its place. In so far as it signifies incorporation into the people of God, it would seem to be comparable with the Jewish rite of circumcision, and indeed it is explicitly compared with circumcision in *Colossians 2₁₁₋₁₂*. But Christians have rightly discarded circumcision, for 'circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing' (1 Cor 7₁₉; cf. Gal 5₆); indeed, to say that a man cannot be numbered among God's people unless he is circumcised is to make void the grace of God and to trust in the law. If, then, it is right for Christians to discard circumcision, why, it is asked, should they adopt another ceremony in its place? If it is wrong to use the one, why is it right to use the other? In the Free Churches there are certainly a number of sound Christians who have been converted and (no doubt quite wrongly) have been received into Church membership without having been baptized. Is their membership in some way deficient, and ought they to be baptized now? If not, does this mean that baptism does not matter very much after all?

There are questions about exactly what happens when an adult is baptized. Is he washed clean from sin, and if so what exactly does this mean? Does he receive the Holy Spirit? If so, how does it come about that there are those (in the New Testament (Acts 10₄₄₋₄₈) and elsewhere) who have received the Holy Spirit before they have been baptized, and others who have not received the Holy Spirit until some time afterwards (Acts 8₁₂₋₁₇)? Does he receive some grace which he would not receive otherwise? If so, what is the evidence that he has received it? Is he, as the *Book of Common Prayer* says, in this ceremony born again and made God's child by adoption? If so, what about people who are born again on other occasions than at their baptism? Does he become incorporated into the Body of Christ? If so, is baptism any more than an official ceremony to recognize in public what is in fact already true?

There are yet more questions which arise when we baptize infants. The Salvation Army says in one of its official publications: 'There is no clear indication that infant baptism was required in the Early Church' (*The Sacraments, the Salvationist's viewpoint* p.63), and there are Christians of other denominations whose minds are not really satisfied on this point. As for possible guidance about infant baptism from the gospels, the Society of Friends holds that the moral of the incident in which Jesus said 'Suffer the little children to come unto me' is not that it is right for children to be baptized, but that Jesus (who was so anxious to receive these unbaptized Jewish children) is glad to receive children who have *not* been baptized and whose parents have no thought of having them baptized. (See *Book of Christian Discipline of London Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends*, par. 214.) If, however, we think it right to baptize infants, what happens to them at their baptism? Are they washed clean from original sin, and if so, exactly what does that mean? Do they receive the Holy Spirit or some grace which they would not otherwise receive, not even through prayer? If so, what are the signs of this? Are they born again? Do they die and rise again with Christ? If so, what, in their case, do we mean by these things? Are

they incorporated into the Christian Church? If so, does this mean anything more than that, officially they are given a new status as far as our human records are concerned? If on the one hand they are the children of Christian parents, are they not *born* into the Church whether they are baptized or not? Even if only the husband is a believer, are not the children already sanctified (cf. 1 Cor 7,14), and ought we not to argue, as the Jews did about proselyte baptism, that children born to parents who are already incorporated into the People of God have no need of baptism? If on the other hand the infants are children of non-Christian parents, they will not grow up as part of the Church however reverently they may have been baptized. Some theologians are accustomed to say that infant baptism demonstrates the objective givenness of salvation, the fact that God works independently of our personal response; but could not the same argument be used of circumcision, and is not the Christian who comforts himself in later life by saying 'I have been baptized' in exactly the same sort of peril as the Jew who says 'I have been circumcised'? If there are two children, one of (let us say) good Methodist parents and one of good Baptist parents, one baptized in infancy and the other not, does the Methodist child receive a grace that is not available for the Baptist child, has the Methodist a higher status before God than the Baptist, is the Methodist more fully incorporated into the Church of God than the Baptist?

There is a further set of questions connected with the rite known as Confirmation or Reception into Church Membership. If in baptism a person is incorporated into the Church and becomes a member of the Body of Christ, what need is there of a further rite to secure the same result? If it is pointed out that the response of faith is necessary before that incorporation can take place, it will be replied that it must, then, have been necessary at the time of baptism, and that if when the person was baptized he was an infant, he could not make that response. If it is then said that the faith of one person can avail for another (as in some of the miracles of Jesus) and that at baptism the availing faith was that of the parents and the Church, it will be replied that if that faith really was availing, then (as in the miracles) no additional faith is needed at some later stage by the person who has already received what God has given.

Some of these questions are no doubt perverse, some of them are wrongly expressed, some of them merely demonstrate ignorance. But we believe it is such questions as these which many people are asking, and we have invited the writers of the following six articles to deal with as many of them as they can. They will not be able to reply to them all, but we hope our readers will find the answers they give to be useful and illuminating.

J. A. K.

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Kenneth Grayston

AT PRESENT THIS subject is an area of vigorous discussion, and the literature about it, in many languages, is very extensive. In a short article it is not possible to do more than state and illustrate some conclusions which merit fuller justification and criticism. Nor is it possible, at this stage, to present the New Testament doctrine of baptism; but the following article outlines some studies of the baptism of John and Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels,¹ baptism in the earliest Christian communities, the Pauline teaching, and the question of infant baptism.

I

According to Mark 1₄₋₅, John in the wilderness uttered a call to repentance and joined it with a prophetic act which assured the baptized that their sins were forgiven. Ancient tradition in Israel regarded the wilderness period of their history as a time of purification from the defilements of Egypt, making them ready to possess the promised land. John the Baptist therefore sought to bring Israel again to Jordan and to purify them for a new possession of the holy land (cf. Ezek 20₃₅₋₆, 36₂₅₋₇). He was stimulated no doubt by the many baptist sects active at this period;² but his rite was distinguished from theirs by being not repeatable. The closest model would be Jewish proselyte baptism,³ intended to cleanse the heathen from their defilement when they were converted. John applied it to circumcised Jews, calling them to turn back to God (which is the Hebrew meaning of 'repentance') and warning them not to rely on circumcision as sealing them sons of Abraham.

For John, baptism was the seal of the new community of Israel against the coming judgement. His aim was to prepare a people for the Mightier One who would baptize with the divine wind and fire of judgement.⁴ For this reason he flayed with his tongue many of those who came to receive this seal (Mt 3, par.). It is significant that his 'supporters' were the people, the harlots and the tax-collectors (Lk 7₂₉₋₃₀); and his opponents were the Pharisees and the scribes, because for them the seal was keeping *their* version of the Law with its repeated ritual handwashing. John's baptism, in its own way, was an offer of God's grace to Israel.

Jesus made recognition of John's baptism the test of anyone's ability to discern His own authority (Mk 11₃₀). He set himself and His work in succession to John. In popular estimation, too, the work of Jesus seemed a renewal or continuation of John's work (Mk 6₁₄, 8₂₈). Hence the report of the Fourth Gospel that Jesus, or His disciples, baptized at the same time as John—and more successfully—is not incredible (Jn 3₂₂₋₆, 4₁₋₂).⁵ It helps to explain why the immediate result of Pentecost was Peter's offer of water baptism; and it gives meaning to the command of the risen Christ (Mt 28₁₉).

It must therefore be presumed that Jesus recognized John's baptism as a sealing of the new people of God against the coming judgement and Himself received it in this sense.⁶ At His baptism (Mk 1₉₋₁₁) the Holy Spirit descended on Him

as a dove (which was the familiar symbol of Israel⁷) and the heavenly voice proclaimed Him Son of God. This may probably be interpreted as meaning that Jesus was empowered as Israel's representative and God's representative (perhaps with Is 11₂ and 41₃ as the model). Thus when Jesus was obedient to the baptism which sealed the repentant community (i.e. a people turning back to God), a new feature was added: His commissioning by the Holy Spirit and the declaration of sonship.

There was a discontinuity, as well as a continuity, between the baptism of John and the baptism of Jesus. John did not find in Jesus the Coming One whom He had expected (Mt 11₂₋₆ par.); and Jesus, although regarding John as the climax of the prophets, yet spoke of him as least in the kingdom of God (Mt 11₁₁₋₁₂ par.). Of particular importance is the saying in Mt 11₁₈₋₁₉ par.: 'John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine; and you say: He has a demon. The Son of Man has come eating and drinking and you say: Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners.' Precisely because Jesus identified Himself with such people, as John did not, His baptism in Jordan committed Him to another baptism. His work would bring men into judgement and would separate them from one another. 'I came to cast fire on earth; and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I constrained until it is accomplished!' (Lk 12₄₉₋₅₀). The pain of this He Himself bore. Not only so, but His work brought Him to the point where He had to bear the Wrath, that is to drink the cup and undergo the baptism (Mk 10_{38f}).⁸ He did this in order to serve men (hence the baptismal reference in Jn 13₁₀). He gave His life as a ransom (not for the few, but) for the many, i.e. to liberate His enemies as well as His friends; and He promised His disciples a share in His baptism and cup. The essential point therefore in this metaphorical use of baptism is that it means sharing Christ's suffering, not (as with John's baptism) to be sealed against the judgement, but to bear the judgement of the many and for the many.

It is credible that the risen Christ commissioned His disciples to baptize, even though Mt 28₁₉₋₂₀ may have been a later formulation. Matthew's tradition at least makes clear the primitive view of baptism. (a) It was commanded by the risen Christ, who had received full authority in heaven and on earth. (b) There was a missionary charge to disciple all the Gentiles. (c) They were to be baptized in such a way as to reproduce the features of Jesus' own baptism (Father, Son, Spirit). (d) The Gentiles in turn were to practise what Jesus had commanded the apostles. (e) Christ is with His disciples in this work until the end of the epoch sees its completion.

II

In Acts the work of John begins the apostolic *kerygma*, whether proclaimed by Peter or Paul (10₃₇, 13₂₄). The apostle appointed to succeed Judas had to be someone who 'accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John' (1₂₁₋₂). The disciples were told to wait in Jerusalem for God's promise 'which, he said "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" ' (1₄₋₅). What the disciples thereupon experienced was parallel to Jesus' experience in Jordan. Consequently, they were commissioned as Jesus was.

Peter's *kerygma* began with John's baptism and the anointing (i.e. appointing, Is 61,₁) of Jesus with the Holy Spirit for His ministry. When therefore the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles, it could only mean that the Gentile God-fearers were recruited into the saving ministry of the people of God. Hence the Holy Spirit was associated with the inclusion of the Gentiles, and this was recognized by baptism. Peter, acting in the name of Jesus Christ, gave the command for them to be baptized (10₄₈).⁹ In this narrative we have an example of the characteristic pattern:

by baptism people become Christ's representatives;
so the Holy Spirit is given to bring others in:
by baptism those brought in are made his representatives . . . and so on.¹⁰

Baptism is not an end in itself, and does not create a self-regarding community. The baptized are indeed given privileges, but their chief privilege is a commission.

In Acts 18₂₄-19, we have the narrative of Apollos and the Ephesian twelve 'who knew only the baptism of John' (18₂₅, 19₃). Apollos was a Spirit-filled man, but he did not convey this gift to his converts. He was apparently an *independent* Christian teacher working in ignorance of the prophetic mission of the *Church*. He needed fuller instruction in the Way, and his converts needed to be brought within the prophetic community by imposition of hands (which signified the sharing of authority). In this narrative also, baptism means entry into the people of God and a commissioning, with the Holy Spirit, to bring the Gentiles in.

Throughout Acts it is seldom even hinted that faith *precedes* baptism. Baptism is itself the act of faith in obedience to the apostolic *kerygma*. At the end of Peter's speech at Pentecost (Acts 2₃₈₋₄₂) the sequence is repentance, baptism, and forgiveness. The Holy Spirit is promised to his hearers and their children¹¹ and (presumably through them) to those far off. The consequence of their baptism is diligence in the apostolic teaching, sharing the apostolic task (*kouwvia*)¹², and using the means of grace. In Acts 8₁₂ the Samaritans gave credence to Philip when he proclaimed the good tidings of the kingdom of God, and they were baptized. Then the Jerusalem apostles laid hands on them (i.e. shared with them the apostolic task) and the Holy Spirit came upon them. The briefly-told story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8₃₆₋₈ presumes that Philip's proclamation ended with the standard offer of baptism.

That this baptismal response to the *kerygma* was rather different from an individualistic 'decision for Christ' is shown by the three examples of baptisms of households in Acts 16₁₅ (Lydia and her household), 16₃₃ (the Philippian jailor with his family), and 18₈ (Crispus with all his household).¹³ The act of faith could be a decision for the family and there is good reason to suppose that that was in fact normal.¹⁴

III

The Pauline tradition may be summed up in the following way:

(a) Baptism is the one way of entry into the Church. Whether writing to Churches of his own founding or to others, Paul assumed that baptism was common to all.¹⁵

(b) Baptism was closely linked with the death of Christ and its benefits. This

also was common ground and ancient tradition (Rom 6₃).¹⁶ Writing to a formerly heathen group of Christians, Paul could say that they had been dead in their trespasses and their fleshly uncircumcision—that is, they had been separated from God and the people of God. Their baptism, however, had removed this double disability by mediating forgiveness and admitting them to the Church (Col 2₁₂₋₁₃). Since these particular Christians were attracted by Jewish rites, Paul presented baptism as the Christian equivalent of the proselyte's admission into Israel by the ritual bath and circumcision.¹⁷

(c) Baptism is even more closely linked with being raised with Christ and being sealed with the Holy Spirit. 'You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead' (Col 2₁₂). This semi-mystical language is immediately given precise content by the ethical imperatives which follow in Colossians 3₁₋₁₇: 'If then you have been raised with Christ . . . put on . . . as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion . . . And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.' In a similar way, though in more general language, baptism into the death of Christ in Romans 6₄ is immediately joined with walking in newness of life and explained as meaning that Christians must offer their bodily powers, no longer for sin's use, but for God's purposes (6₅₋₁₄). This is faith's obedient response to baptism.

In Paul's hands the old formula of being baptized into Christ Jesus or into the name of Christ is enriched by this reference to the risen life: 'As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ' (Gal 3₂₇). To put on Christ means not only to belong to Him, but also to act in His character. As the context shows, putting on Christ in baptism is another way of saying that we are sons of God by faith,¹⁸ and that we thereby form a community which transcends racial, social, and natural distinctions (cf. Col 3₁₁). We can perhaps see what being baptized into Christ meant for Paul by examining the analogy which he drew with Moses in 1 Cor 10₂: 'all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea'. The Israelites shared with Moses the experience of escaping from Egypt and with him knew the divine protection in danger. They belonged to the company of God's people led onward by Moses. Even this common experience, of course, did not guarantee their entry into the promised land. They were still free to choose and, by their response to this 'baptism', demonstrate what sort of people they were.

A similar group of ideas must have been in Paul's mind about Christian baptism; and it is appropriate to recall his use of the word 'seal': 'It is God who established us with you, and has anointed us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee' (2 Cor 1₂₁₋₂; cf. Eph 1₁₃, 4₃₀). God does not break this sealing, though we may. It is a guarantee not so much of our security as of our commissioning.

(d) By baptism God makes us His holy people, and our response is to work out the consequences. In 1 Corinthians 6₁₁ Paul said, after reminding the Corinthians of their former immoral behaviour: 'But you were washed, you were consecrated (*τηριάσθητε*), you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.' This clear baptismal reference, using the triune name, means that God washed, consecrated and justified them. By baptism they became holy people (*ἅγιοι*), they were called as God's holy people

and consecrated in Christ Jesus (*τηγασμένοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητοὶ ἄγιοι*, 1 Cor 1₃). The baptized begin their Christian lives by being holy, realize in living what their consecration means, and know its fulness only at the end (cf. Eph 5₂₆₋₇).¹⁹

(e) Baptism is a centre of unity for the varied ministries of the Church. 'We were all baptized in one Spirit into one body' (1 Cor 12₁₃; cf. Eph 4₅). Hence Paul regarded the rivalry between groups at Corinth—based partly on the evangelists who had baptized the converts—as serious and dangerous (1 Cor 1₁₃₋₁₇). In this passage he distinguished evangelizing and baptizing, but not so as to minimize the importance of baptism. Baptism is the Church's act in recognizing the person for whom Christ died and admitting him to the varied ministries of the one people of God.

IV

There are two questions about infant baptism: whether infants were baptized in the New Testament period, and how their baptism may be related to New Testament teaching.

(a) In favour of the view that infants were baptized in the early days of the Church²⁰ it may be held that John's baptism was modelled on Jewish proselyte baptism (known to have been practised in the time of Hillel and Shammai). According to the oldest rabbinic sources, when parents were converted to Judaism the children (including babies) were admitted at the same time. All converts came under the yoke of the Law and were baptized; males were also circumcised.²¹ If a proselyte mother gave birth to a child after her own baptism, the child was not baptized, but was already a Jewish child.

Baptism of children *when parents became Christian* is supported by the baptism of households and the promise 'to you and your children'. Children are indeed not specifically mentioned in the households, but nor are they excluded. Nowhere is it suggested that children below a certain age may not be baptized; and the ancient Jewish tradition of family solidarity (clearly evidenced in Acts 16₃₄, 'He rejoiced with all his household that *he* had believed in God') included children and sucklings.

Polycarp's famous statement at his martyrdom in 156 that he had served his Lord for eighty-six years would place his baptism about A.D. 70. Justin spoke of 'many men and women of sixty or seventy years old who were disciplined from childhood'—that is, were baptized as children between A.D. 85-95.²²

For the baptism of the *children of Christian marriages* we have the evidence of Origen²³ (whose family had been Christian for several generations) who said that infant baptism went back to the apostles. Direct patristic evidence and inscriptions provide sound testimony for the second century; there is indirect patristic evidence for the first century. Direct New Testament evidence does not exist,²⁴ but it is possible that Mark 10₁₃₋₁₆ par. may contain indirect testimony. All forms of the saying begin with 'Amen', have a negative requirement related to a child, and speak of entering (or seeing) the kingdom of God. The saying, in its original setting in the ministry of Jesus, had nothing to do with baptism; but the version in John 3₅ shows that it was adapted to baptism, and there are reasons for supposing that even in its synoptic form the saying was recorded, at least in part, as a dominical justification of the already existing practice of baptizing the children of Christian marriages.

It would seem that in the earliest period children were included within the baptized community for two reasons: (i) The period before the End was very short and there was no guarantee that children would grow to years of discretion (and in any case many infants died young). So they were included by the principle of family solidarity. (ii) Before long there were Christians of the second generation, the problem of any successful mission field. Entry into the Church was by baptism; and we hear nothing of two classes of Christians, baptized and unbaptized. We should beware of assuming, however, that the New Testament custom is immediately applicable to our own very different time and conditions.

(b) There is no solution to any question about baptism along the way of individualism. If we ask what a baptized person gains which an unbaptized person does not possess, the answer is that he is a member of the prophetic *community* and that he shares in the *Church* the gift of the Holy Spirit. If we ask why this should be by baptism and not by simple profession of faith, then we must also ask why Jesus submitted to baptism and commanded His disciples to baptize. The answer may be that in baptism God acts, in professing our faith we act. If we say that God would surely not make salvation dependent on baptism, the answer is that salvation is dependent on Christ and is a corporate thing. Baptism admits to the saving (because saved) community.

There is no answer to any question about baptism along the way of separating faith from baptism and making baptism an endorsement of faith. From baptism faith grows. What it is to have faith in Christ may be discovered only at the end of a long and devoted Christian life. The meaning of faith is discovered by active membership of the Church, by dying daily with Christ and putting on Christ daily, by living the life of the Holy Spirit. That is why children are admitted to Christ's Church by baptism, and why their admission must presume the careful sponsorship of the Church.

It may not be supposed that children before the age of reflection and the articulate assumption of responsibility are inactive members of the Christian Church. From the very first time they share the Holy Spirit with the whole Church. But there is a time when they are no longer children and must consciously become as little children in a new way. At this stage they assume adult responsibility, they specifically accept the disciple's privilege of suffering with Christ and begin to discover their particular ministry in the Body of Christ. The experience of conversion may coincide with this step; but we do not hold that only the converted are members of the Church. That would be a sad minimizing of conversion. Conversion takes place within the Church and marks the new awareness of what Christ has already done for us in His double baptism by water and by blood.

¹ The important baptismal symbolism of the Fourth Gospel is a study on its own.

² J. Thomas, *Le Mouvement Baptiste en Palestine et Syrie* (1935).

³ The most recent material is in J. Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries* (1960). For women it was the only rite; for men it was joined with circumcision. Some rabbis regarded baptism, others circumcision, as conferring status as a Jew.

⁴ So we should probably interpret the Q tradition, Matthew 3:11-12 par. (cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* (1947), p.126. In Mark and John baptism is with the Holy Spirit, signifying new life for Israel, as in Ezekiel 37. But the Baptist was certainly a prophet of judgement in the first place.

⁵ Cf. W. F. Flemington, *New Testament Doctrine of Baptism* (1948), pp.30-1; C. K. Barrett, *Gospel according to St. John* (1955), p.192.

⁶ This interpretation helps to explain why the early tradition recorded the narrative of the baptism without objection. Matthew 3:14-15 guards against the possible implication that John might be greater than Jesus and says nothing about awareness of sin. The saying in 3:16 may be paraphrased: 'In this way [by submission to the prophetic sign of John's baptism] it is proper for us [Jesus and the disciples] to fulfil every indication of God's righteous will.' By being baptized Jesus accepted the signs of God's coming judgement on His people and then directed His ministry towards it.

⁷ Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum N.T. aus Talmud u. Midrash I* (1922), pp.123f.

⁸ Cf. L. Goppelt, 'πονήριον', *T.W.z.N.T.*, VI (1959), pp.149-53.

⁹ So it is possible (and I think preferable) to translate.

¹⁰ The otherwise puzzling variation in Acts in the order Baptism-Holy Spirit or Holy Spirit-Baptism is readily explicable by this pattern. It simply depends at which point the narrative begins. In any case, too much must not be made of the details of Luke's story-telling. His aim was to exemplify and illuminate certain great themes, not to copy out minute books or case histories.

¹¹ i.e. sons and daughters of Peter's hearers, not the coming generations; see Jeremias, *I.B.F.F.C.*, p.40.

¹² For this meaning of *kouwvlo*, see *Philippians 1:5*; *Galatians 2:9*.

¹³ Perhaps also Cornelius (Acts 11:14) and in the letters of Paul, the household of Stephanus (1 Cor 1:16).

¹⁴ It is worth pointing out that even here faith does not precede baptism (in 16:15 it is mentioned afterwards), but is parallel to it.

¹⁵ So also when Peter was writing to Asia Minor. The same point is incidentally demonstrated by 'baptism for the dead' (1 Cor 15:29). This practice presumed that baptism conferred membership of a community which transcended death and sealed its members for the End. See J. Jeremias, *N.T.S.*, II.155f.

¹⁶ 'Buried with him' corresponds to the primitive formula of 1 Corinthians 5:4; cf. Colossians 2:12. The argument of 1 Corinthians 1:13-17 shows that baptism into the name of Christ is used in parallel with 'Christ died for you', i.e. for your sins.

¹⁷ In view of Paul's other references to circumcision, it is unlikely that it contributed much to his theological understanding of baptism, however much it may have prompted the use of baptism for infants. See note 21.

¹⁸ An echo of Jesus' baptism.

¹⁹ Cf. A. Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (1958), p.238 n.l.

²⁰ It is sometimes not realized that this view has strong support. The fullest arguments and bibliography are in Jeremias, *I.B.F.F.C.*. There is a reply by K. Aland, *Die Säuglingsstaufe im Neuen Testament und in der alten Kirche* (Theol. Existenz heute 1961).

²¹ If Paul's understanding of baptism may be compared with proselyte baptism, it may be noted that (i) he declined circumcision which distinguished between male and female, and, when pressed, said that dying with Christ is 'the circumcision of Christ'; and (ii) he declared that we become Christians, not by undertaking the yoke of the Law, but by faith, which is total reliance on Christ.

²² Mart., *Polyc.*, 9. 3; Justin, *Apol.*, I. 15. 6.

²³ See Jeremias, *I.B.F.F.C.*, pp.65f.

²⁴ Jeremias, *I.B.F.F.C.* p.48, has recently admitted that 1 Corinthians 7:14c has no bearing on the question.

THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM

A. Marcus Ward

WE ARE NOT CONCERNED in this article with the many questions now under debate as to the meaning of baptism, still less with the vexed question of infant baptism. Our concern is with the difficulties of many today who ask: Why use baptism at all?

This is a question which must be answered against the background of, and in relation to, the well-nigh universal practice, reaching back to the New Testament and continuing unbroken, through times of corruption and reformation, of receiving each person into the fellowship of the Church by baptism in the name of the triune God, declaring the belief that this is the way God bids His children come to Him.

With the exception of the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, every Christian communion accepts baptism as of divine appointment and perpetual obligation, and has done so from the beginning. Baptism is an *ordinance*, accepted by the universal Church, either as directly instituted by Christ or as inherited from the Apostolic Church, as the rite of admission into the Church. Some go so far as to say that only the baptized should be called Christians. Others are content to say that while baptism does not bind God's action, we are justified in regarding it as the normal entrance to the Church and so in insisting on its necessity.

What, then, is to be said of the groups of Christian believers who use neither of the New Testament Sacraments? The Salvation Army, concerned less by the use of ancient ritual people put their trust in it rather than in the living God and forget their need of Christ, does not practise baptism. But it uses outward signs of its own and may be left out of this discussion. The case of the Friends is more significant. They hold, rightly, that God's blessing is not rigidly bound to any particular means but go on to deny the necessity for men of any particular sacrament. The religion of Christ, they argue, is too inward and spiritual for Him to require outward forms and ceremonies. They cannot think that God has singled out particular acts to be special symbols or instruments of His grace. They do not deny that God gives Himself to men in and through material as well as personal means. Indeed they take this sacramental principle so seriously as to put no limit on the means of grace and emphasize the sacramental nature of all life. But they protest that to be united with Christ requires no *particular* outward rite. He is to be known only through trust and obedience, love and commitment. Those who know the substance can dispense with the shadow. There is no place in Christianity for forms and ordinances.

Manifestly no discussion of these matters can ignore or treat lightly the witness of the Friends. Among them the sheer goodness in lives not visibly brought into the Church by baptism is undeniable. Their practice often exposes and shames

that of others. In them the fruit of the Spirit seems independent of any sacrament. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to ask whether the Society of Friends may not owe much to the sacramental practice of Christendom at large. Could the Society have come into being and continued apart from 'the going concern'? We do not and cannot exclude the Friends, and individuals who share their views, from the body of the faithful and from the benefits of redemption simply on the ground that they do not participate in the Sacraments of the Gospel, but we may think that they are wrong to abstain. Indeed, their failure to observe baptism seems to ignore the plain command of Christ and to undervalue the total witness of the vast majority of their fellow Christians down the years.

We agree with them that God provides many material means to awaken and nourish the life of the spirit. But we go further, and believe that to certain actions He has specially linked His promise and that among them is baptism. God wills to reach us, and to do this He has chosen His own material means. Baptism is one such means by which Christ Himself and the gifts He came to bring are, as the Shorter Catechism of 1647 puts it, 'represented, sealed and applied'.

The Church as a whole has always been certain that the observance of baptism (as of the Lord's supper) is rooted in the intention of Christ as declared in Scripture. However, part of our problem is that many, and not only the Friends, hold the New Testament evidence to be inconclusive and to cast doubt on whether the observance of baptism is, after all, so fundamental and central. The matter of the explicit institution of the rite by Jesus is complicated by the results of historical criticism of the Gospels. Not all today are ready or willing to say, on the basis of Matthew 28₁₉ and John 3₅—the Lord has commanded it, and that is the end of the matter. There can, however, be no doubt at all that from Pentecost onwards, the practice of baptism, with insistence on its use and the conviction of its relevance to salvation, points to the belief of the first church, that it had been instituted by the Lord. Of this, the Gospel references may not be proof; they are certainly witness.

In the New Testament Church, baptism stands out as one of two repeated actions closely associated with Christ. Go back as far as we can in tracing the life of the Church, it is always in this way that men are received into it. Paul's letters, the earliest Christian writings, have many references, e.g. Romans 6₃, 1 Corinthians 1_{13ff}, 6₁₁, 10₂, 12₁₃, 15₂₀, Galatians 3₂₇, Ephesians 4_{4ff}, Colossians 2₁₂ (cf. 1 Pet 3₂₁), which assume that his readers, like himself, had been baptized and that they knew what the rite meant. It was a sacrament of union with Christ and possession by Him, leading to union in and with His Body the Church. It was both sign and means of sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ with all the benefits. To receive baptism was to enter the new creation now open to all through Christ. (Cf. Heb 6₂, which regards baptism as one of the fundamentals with which all Christians are familiar.) The many references in Acts, e.g. 2₃₈, 4₁, 8_{3ff}, 9₁₈, 10₄₇, 16₁₅, 33, read in the light of Paul, show that baptism was the normal and invariable way of entrance into membership of the Church, having close relation to the forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was the means whereby the convert became united to Christ, with all the attendant benefits and responsibilities. Indeed the New Testament does not consider that any man can be a member of Christ and His Church without

baptism. From the beginning it was an act of obedience to the command of the risen Christ. Whatever the date of Matthew 28_{18g} and Mark 16₁₆, these passages express the prior belief.

The Jews had received converts by circumcision and baptism. The Church rejected the former as being the rite of admission for those still expecting Messiah, but of no value after He had come. Yet, significantly, they retained baptism as having been accepted and transformed by Him. His own baptism by John was the example of Christian baptism (Mt 3_{18g}; Mk 1_{9g}; Mk 3_{21t}). He had no need of John's baptism, involving repentance and deliverance from the wrath of God. He accepted it when He assumed the ministry of the Servant-Son whose work was to be one with His people and to bear their sins. Thus His baptism points to His death on the Cross. Only after this, when, His saving work done, He is ready to baptize with Holy Spirit, does the risen Lord command His disciples to baptize. The baptism they administer is not the old proselyte baptism, not even that of John, but baptism into union with Christ, the sign and seal of identification with Him and so of admission into the Church, His Body. In this sense baptism has firm historical foundation in the life of Jesus. Baptism into His Name (later expanded into the Triune Name) is universal in the New Testament Church as the necessary means whereby the convert enters the new People of God. Whether or not Matthew 28₁₉ can be cited as proof that Jesus said 'Do this' of baptism as of the Lord's supper, the belief that the practice derives from His command is as nearly demonstrable as any historical fact can be. Even if we were compelled to remove from the records the words of Matthew 28₁₉ we would still have to trace the origin of Christian baptism to Him. Nothing else would account for the universal usage of the early Church or the importance attached to it.

It seems difficult to understand why Christians of the twentieth century should feel themselves free to dispense with a means of grace so manifestly commanded by God in the first and so universally blessed in the years between. God is not bound by His sacraments, but we are.

It may well be that in many cases the reluctance to regard baptism as necessary is due to failure to understand its meaning. To explore that meaning is beyond the scope of this article, but enough has been indicated, especially in the New Testament references above, to plead for the recognition of baptism as the veritable *monstrance* of the Gospel, the moving reiteration of what God in Christ has done for our salvation, the given sign and seal of the once-for-all facts. Can a man, it has been asked, who wishes to be a Christian in the fullest sense afford to neglect the occasion of stimulus and fruitful crisis as the rite has been proved in long experience to afford? And those who are repelled by mere external faithless observance can take courage from the old maxim: *abusus non tollit usum*. Wrong use does not remove the possibility of right use. Mere formalism denies the very heart of the Christian religion, but baptism rightly used is indeed the 'effectual token' of man's dependence on God, commitment to God, and belonging to God in and with the saved and saving community of Christ.

More poignantly, the necessity of baptism is questioned by those who know only too well what it means, or may mean. Baptism often seems of greater import in a non-Christian land than in one that is nominally Christian. There it

is clearly understood to mark the decisive step whereby a man leaves his own community to enter another. Where the communal character of a religion is strong, as with Hinduism, there are great obstacles to accepting baptism. Many a lover of Jesus in such a context has hesitated to take the decisive step and questioned whether the Friend of Sinners requires it. Those in 'Christian' lands who are uncertain as to whether baptism is necessary may well read in A. G. Hogg's *The Christian Message to the Hindu* (pp. 39ff.) the moving account of the missionary's encounter with the young Brahmin enquirer and what the refusal to offer oneself for baptism may involve for being a convert or remaining a Christian. It comes in the end very simply to the recognition that 'Come, be my disciple' means 'Come, join my Church.' And God has made known to us no other way of doing this than by submitting ourselves to baptism. In this sense we plead its 'necessity'.

We do not mean that apart from baptism there is no salvation, but that God has appointed the sacrament as means and pledge of His grace, for our help. Dare any of us lightly refuse such help? Every act of baptism is a declaration of the Gospel. It proclaims by the visible deed that forgiveness and new life in Christ which preaching proclaims by the audible word. To insist on baptism is not to limit the Gospel by isolating part of it within a sacred rite. It is to obey Christ's command that the Gospel be administered in this special way. In the larger sense, baptism is an act of God done in the Church. All that the Gospel offers to the world is offered to the individual in this solemn act commanded by Christ. It is sign and seal of a promise from God on which we can rely. Can we doubt that Christ's intention that His disciples should baptize is as clear as His will that the Gospel should be preached?

THE BAPTIST POSITION CONSIDERED

Rupert E. Davies

A SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD statement of the Baptist position appears in the Baptist Confession of 1646, and there is no reason to think that modern Baptists have any wish to go back on it:

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons *professing faith*, or that are made disciples; who, upon professing faith, ought to be baptized and after to partake of the Lord's Supper. . . . The way and manner of dispensing this ordinance, is *dipping or plunging the body under water*. It, being a sign,

must answer the thing signified: which is, that interest the saints have in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; and that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and risen again, so certainly shall the bodies of the saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reign with Christ [Articles XXXIX and XL].

Alternatively, the position can be stated in the form of what has been called the 'Baptist Syllogism': 'The Church is the company of those who have faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is the sign of entry into the Church. Therefore baptism is administered to those who have faith in Jesus Christ (and to no one else).'

Ever since its formulation, this conviction has been vigorously attacked by the non-Baptist parts of Christendom, and the attack has nearly as often taken the form of personal abuse as that of reasoned argument. A group of younger Baptist theologians have recently re-stated the traditional position of their Church in a more ecumenical manner than was possible in the past,¹ and it is quite clear that it needs to be re-examined in a similar spirit in every generation by those Christians who do not hold it.

The heart of the position lies in its insistence that the New Testament knows nothing of any baptism except that which follows upon the profession of personal faith. The Baptists point out the very prominent place taken by baptism in the building up of the first Christian community, and the inseparable relation in the New Testament between baptism and faith. They further claim that there are no examples in the New Testament of the administration of baptism to those without faith. Thus the baptism of infants, or of any children below the age of personal faith, or of anyone without personal faith, is excluded.

To those who refer to the descriptions of the baptizing of 'households' in the Acts of the Apostles (16, 15, 33, and, probably, 18), and urge that one at least of these 'households' must have included children, they reply that this is a mere supposition, and that 'household' may refer simply to the slaves in the house. To the more subtle exegetes who adduce the analogy of circumcision, arguing that as membership of the ancient People of God was granted to infants through circumcision, so membership of the new People of God must be granted to infants through baptism, their reply is fourfold: (a) New Testament writers tend to stress the *differences* between circumcision under the Law and the 'circumcision of the heart' which comes from faith, not the similarities. (b) Circumcision was a mere outward sign, and could well be dispensed to infants; baptism is an 'effective sign', closely connected with faith, and so cannot. (c) Circumcision marked admission into a race, and was in that sense impersonal; baptism marks admission into a community of persons. (d) Circumcision applied only to boys; but baptism is for both sexes.²

They have an answer, too, to those who say that the practice of paedobaptism is proved for the early Church by the facts of proselyte baptism among the Jews, which the Christian Church, it is said, took over and adapted to its purposes. When Gentiles were converted to the Jewish faith and wished to enter the Jewish Church, they were baptized by immersion before being circumcised, and their baptism indicated both ceremonial and moral cleansing from the defilements of paganism. It was an unrepeatable rite. And it was administered to the whole family of the convert, including, of course, his children, however young (the details of all this are not unanimously agreed, but there is enough

agreement between Baptists and non-Baptists, so far, for our present purpose). The similarity to Christian baptism is so obvious, say the paedobaptist theologians, that we may safely conclude that the children of converted pagans were baptized when their parent or parents became Christian.

To this the Baptist reply is that there are differences as well as similarities (for instance, proselyte baptism was a private rite, Christian baptism a public one); and in any case we must suppose that the Church made some changes when taking over the rite. Besides, it was only the children already born to the proselyte parents who were baptized, later-born children being exempt, and those children who were baptized without their consent retained the right to renounce the arrangement made on their behalf, and were not thought of as true Israelites until they had reached maturity. Thus all that proselyte baptism *can* prove about Christian baptism (and it is doubtful whether it proves even this) is that children born before conversion were baptized, with the right to renounce their baptism later—not that the children born to Christian parents were baptized.³

But the trump card of the Baptist argument is Romans 6_{3,4}: 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life' (RSV). How, it is asked, can this possibly apply to baptized infants, except on some crude theory of baptismal regeneration, or to anyone without a living, personal faith in Christ by which he grasps the promises of God?

These are all well-known arguments on the Baptist side. What may be a new one is adduced by Neville Clark.⁴ Baptism in the New Testament, he points out—and here he is in line with much recent writing on Baptism from all points of view—is essentially incorporation into the whole 'saving history' of the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and parousia of Jesus Christ; not just into the baptism of Christ, but into what he calls the *totus Christus*. This 'saving-history', of course, took place before we were born, and without our initiative or participation; it is by faith that we are taken up into it and share its blessings. Now, says Mr Clark, we must be careful not to emphasize God's initiative in the matter at the expense of our appropriation of salvation by faith—as if our salvation were arranged and took place over our heads and apart from us; and we must be equally careful not to emphasize our share in the matter at the expense of God's initiative—as if our salvation depended on us. Paedobaptism, he suggests, falls into the first error, and makes salvation into something which happens irrespectively of us; whereas the truth is that it is by faith that we are incorporated into the Body of Christ and His saving acts, and this truth is well expressed by believers' baptism.

Why do almost all the communions of the Christian Church set their faces against this well-documented doctrine of believers' baptism? Sometimes, no doubt, for discreditable reasons. The alliance of Church and State in the time of Constantine's success made it highly convenient to deal out baptism to everyone as soon as he was born, and so to make the nation co-terminous with the Church. It is still convenient to do this in countries where the Church is

'established'. And once the doctrine of Original Sin had been accepted by the Church at large in the form which doomed everyone dying unbaptized to eternal punishment (though, to be sure, of a very mild kind in the case of infants!), there was the strongest possible incentive to provide baptism for everyone at the earliest possible moment.

But the case against believers' baptism as the sole permissible and valid baptism does not rest on these considerations. The primary objection to it is that it conflicts with the New Testament at three vital points. In the first place, by excluding children from the People of God it denies the universality of the Gospel. Baptist theology has never been very clear about the status of children before God, as is shown by the comparatively recent introduction of the service for the dedication of infants, but we may take it that they are not consigned to any kind of damnation, but are covered in some way by the salvation effected by Jesus Christ. Even so, on any Baptist view of the matter, they are reckoned to be outside the Church. But how can we deny a place either in the Kingdom of God or in the Church of Christ to those of whom Christ Himself said, 'Let them come to me and forbid them not'? Surely Jesus received those who came to Him, and to be received by Jesus is to enter the Kingdom of God and so to be incorporated into the Church.

In the second place, the New Testament witness is that salvation is the work of God's grace, not of our faith. But the Baptists claim that we are not redeemed until we have faith. This is to run into the second of the dangers pointed out by Neville Clark—of implying that salvation depends on us.⁵ They do not, of course, wish to imply this, for they believe in the priority of grace to faith as much as anyone. But the sole and solitary emphasis on the moment of faith, even on the profession of faith, as the indispensable pre-requisite of baptism, leads inexorably to the implication suggested. In fact, we were redeemed, not only long before we had faith, but long before we were born, and the service of infant baptism is—among other things—an impressive testimony to the priority of grace.

In the third place, the Baptist doctrine of baptism leads to an atomizing, individualistic notion of the Church. It involves the idea that the Church consists only of those who have professed personal faith; those who have not reached that state of spiritual development are not admitted to it; it is made up of those who have made a personal, conscious commitment. There is, of course, no doubt that personal, conscious commitment is a part, and an essential part, of the life of the Church. But it is not the only part; it does not in itself constitute the Church. On the Baptist view, taken strictly, it does. But the Church in the New Testament is constituted by the act of Christ; it is there before we have faith; it is the People of God continuous through history; it is not only a nursery of saints, it is a hospital for sinners; and in it are to be found people at all stages of spiritual development. It is a corporate reality, whose life is in Christ, into which we enter, not a society which is formed by the membership which it is able to attract, and which is *afterwards* guided and blessed by God. Who can deny that in the course of history Baptist piety has sometimes shown its individualism by undue emphasis on the right of approach to God possessed by each believer, and by the sturdy independence of each Baptist congregation, with a diminished sense of the unity of Christ's holy, catholic and apostolic Church?

Every communion in Christendom has its weaknesses, and this is perhaps the weakness of the Baptists.

But if paedobaptism represents more correctly than believers' baptism the theology of the New Testament, why do we not find clear evidence of paedobaptism in the New Testament? The answer is that the evidence is much clearer than it has usually been thought to be. It is common ground that in the missionary situation which the New Testament describes the emphasis was bound to be on the baptism of those who had been converted from paganism to the Christian Faith. This is, in fact, what we find. But Joachim Jeremias, following Ethelbert Stauffer, has recently shown quite conclusively that in the Old Testament the reference to the 'household' of a man invariably includes his children, and in fact relates especially to his children rather than to any other members of his establishment (see Gen 45₁₈ff, and 1 Sam 22₁₆, among several passages that Jeremias adduces). We can take it with almost complete confidence that the households of Cornelius, the Philippian gaoler, and Lydia, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, included children.⁶ Moreover, as Jeremias shows, it was an unquestioned presupposition of Hebrew thinking that a family was a unity; if the head of a family was converted to a new faith, it was taken for granted that his family changed over as well at the same time; and in the case of conversion to Christianity, baptism of the whole family would inevitably follow.⁷

The case is not quite so clear when we come to the children born to parents who were already Christian, and Jeremias at one time held that they were not baptized in New Testament times. But he is now convinced that St Mark 10₁₃₋₁₆ (including the words, 'let the children come to me') was taken by Christians in the apostolic age, including St Mark's first readers, as giving dominical authority for the baptism of their children (though Jesus Himself spoke, of course, in 'pre-sacramental' terms); and that therefore infant baptism of the children of believers was practised in the apostolic age.⁸ When we reflect that we never hear in the New Testament, or ever in the early Church until the idea of postponing baptism for fear of subsequent sin had grown up, of the baptism in maturity of the children of believers, and notice that there is no sign of any dispute between those who believed in baptizing 'Christian' children and those who did not, we may conclude that Jeremias's argument is very strong.

But what shall we make of the 'theology of baptism' in Romans 6_{3, 4}? Here we may at once concede the Baptist contention that it cannot possibly refer to the baptism of infants. St Paul had in mind those who in his time were the most frequent recipients of baptism—adult converts. There is no need at all for us to apply what he says to the baptism of infants. The paedobaptist doctrine is not—or should not be—that baptized infants are 'buried with Christ into death' that they may be raised at once from the dead to 'newness of life', but rather that they are received by Christ into His Church, so that there they may come to appropriate by personal commitment and conscious faith all the blessings of salvation, and thereby be buried with Christ and rise again with Christ to the new life. In other words, what in believers' baptism is signified as a single event, the immediate incorporation of the believer into the life, death, resurrection, ascension and (by anticipation) the parousia of Jesus, is signified by infant baptism as a process which by the grace of God is now begun, and will

continue, by the same grace, till it is consummated in burial with Christ and rising again with Him.

But is this not to devalue personal faith, and the whole doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone, and to fall into the first of Neville Clark's 'dangers'—that of making salvation into something which is carried out above our heads, without our faith or even our knowledge? On the contrary, it gives the place both to grace and to faith which is assigned to them in the New Testament. Grace comes first, seen in God's act for the salvation of the world and everyone in it, seen also in the foundation of the Church of Christ, which stands ready to receive everyone born on the earth; faith is first seen at baptism in the response of the believing Church to the gracious act of God, and (it is to be hoped) in the response of the child's parents. Then the baptized child grows up within the Church, where he hears the Gospel and is surrounded with the care and the teaching of the believing, worshipping community. By the gift of God, faith is born in him, and he responds with full heart to the grace of God and consciously commits himself to Jesus Christ in His Church. Thus his baptism is 'improved'; his sins are forgiven by grace through faith.

The defect of the Baptist view is, then, that it emphasizes one side of biblical teaching, that which is concerned with faith, to the detriment of those other sides which are concerned with grace and the Church. Yet there is no final contradiction between Baptists and Paedobaptists. Both are deeply committed to the three doctrines of grace and faith and the Church, and to their inner coherence. The Baptists hold that the operation of faith is necessarily anterior to the work of grace in the soul and to incorporation in the Church; the others hold that it is not. Is it possible for them to live together in fellowship? It may be the contribution of the Baptist communion, with its insistence on personal faith, to save the rest of us from neglecting it, and to make sure that it is preserved in its proper form within the witness of the coming great Church.

¹ in *Christian Baptism*, ed. by A. Gilmore (Lutterworth).

² v. A. Gilmore in *Christian Baptism*, pp.55-65.

³ cf. Gilmore, *op. cit.*, pp.65-75.

⁴ In *Christian Baptism*, pp.306-26.

⁵ *supra*, p.172

⁶ *Infant Baptism in the First Four Centuries*, pp.20-2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.22f.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.48-55.

REGENERATION AND THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO INFANT AND BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

Arthur W. Wainwright

A ROMAN CATHOLIC priest was interviewing a young man who, though he was a Roman Catholic by upbringing, had been converted in a Protestant mission hall. The young man explained that when he had been converted he had been born again. With evangelical earnestness he asked the priest: 'Have you been born again, Father?' The priest replied that he had been born again when, as an infant, he had been baptized.

Many people, like the young man, link rebirth or regeneration with conversion. Many, like the priest, link it with infant baptism. The interpretation which links regeneration with conversion claims that the real beginning of the Christian life occurs when a man undergoes a radical change of heart. He repents of his sins, puts his trust in Christ, and deliberately turns his back upon his former way of life, which, even if it has been conventionally moral, has not been Christ-centred. This change of heart is followed by fruits of the Spirit. The convert's new attitude to life leads him to new realms of experience. It also leads him to a new quality of conduct. He experiences inner peace and joy. He really loves God and his neighbour.

There are several reasons in favour of describing such a conversion as regeneration. If a man is truly converted, he knows that it is not his own doing but God's. He is conscious of God's gracious and merciful activity towards him. The divine initiative is also a characteristic of regeneration. 'By his own mercy we have been born anew' (1 Pet 1₃; cf. 1₂₂).

Conversion and regeneration are both instantaneous, not gradual events. The metaphor of rebirth cannot refer to a gradual event. It must describe a moment in time.

Conversion is an event in which a man receives forgiveness and has faith. Regeneration too is an event in which a man is forgiven. This is implied by the phrase, 'washing of regeneration' (Tit 3₅). And regeneration is closely connected with faith. 'Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God' (1 Jn 5₁).

Regeneration and conversion, however, cannot be convincingly identified unless conversion is shown to be the actual beginning of the Christian life. A new birth must be the beginning of a new life. Regeneration means that a man begins to be in Christ and to live in the power of the Spirit. Regeneration is followed by 'renewal in the Holy Spirit' (Tit 3₅). This does not mean that the regenerate life is free from sin. According to 1 Jn 3₉, 'No one born of God commits sin'. But this saying ought not to be taken in isolation. The First Epistle of

John assumes that the readers are already children of God (1 Jn 3₂) and at the same time sinners (1 Jn 1₈). The epistle reveals the tension between what Christians as children of God ought to be and what in fact they are. A similar tension is shown when Paul uses metaphors which are akin to that of rebirth. Christians, he says, are sons of God by adoption, who have received freedom to live by the Spirit (Gal 4₁₋₅₂₄; cf. Rom 8₁₋₁₇). At the same time Paul has to exhort them to use their freedom rightly. 'If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit' (Gal 5₂₅). He also uses the metaphor of death and resurrection. Christians must consider themselves 'dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus' (Rom 6₁₁). But he has to warn them: 'Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies' (Rom 6₁₂). The man who has become a son of God and walks in newness of life does not thereby become sinless. But he is no longer without adequate defence against sin. He lives in the strength of Christ who has overcome sin, and his life is capable of growing in holiness.

Now it can be argued that at conversion the same sort of change occurs. A man 'dies to sin', not because he suddenly attains sinless perfection, but because sin ceases to have its old spell over him. He is 'alive to God' because the Spirit leads him to live a life of new moral and spiritual quality.

Conversion, although it is often connected with regeneration, is not so often linked with baptism. Many a person who is converted has already been baptized in infancy and does not receive a second baptism. Some Christian communities which place great emphasis on conversion do not practise baptism. But if conversion is in fact the moment of regeneration, there is scriptural support for relating it to baptism. John 3₅ speaks of being 'born of water and the Spirit'. The phrase 'washing of regeneration' (Tit 3₅) seems to refer to baptism. And Paul's metaphor of dying and rising with Christ is explicitly linked with baptism (Rom 6₄).

A connexion can be made between conversion and infant baptism. It is possible to claim that an infant is baptized with a view to a future regeneration. Then infant baptism would be the symbol of the regeneration which might occur in later life at conversion. A better case can be made, however, for connecting this kind of regeneration with believers' baptism. A sacrament of initiation ought to be linked with a new birth which is not far removed from it in time. And believers' baptism is such a sacrament, for it declares a change of life which has recently taken place at the time of conversion. Moreover, the symbolism of the sacrament will make a powerful impression upon the person who is being baptized. As he is washed by the water, he will know that God has forgiven the sins of which he has repented; as he is immersed, he will know that he has died to sin; and as he rises from the water, he will know that he is alive to God. The sacrament vividly declares the change which has already taken place at his conversion. It is possible to say that a person is born again in believers' baptism, only if regeneration is identified with formal incorporation into the Church, for it is clear that the new life of the convert has already begun. If he had not repented, professed his faith, and shown some fruits of the Spirit, he would not have been baptized.

A second interpretation of regeneration links it closely with infant baptism. It is said that the real beginning of the Christian life can occur in early infancy. If an older person who has not been brought up in the sphere of the Church is

converted, then he must submit to believers' baptism, and his rebirth will take place either at his conversion or at his baptism. But if a child is brought up in the community of the Christian Church, then his rebirth, according to this point of view, would take place in infancy either during or before infant baptism.

Several arguments give strong support to this interpretation. First, both baptism and regeneration stand for the beginning of a new kind of life. But if they are linked with a conversion which occurs in adolescence or adult life, it is implied that the real beginning of a man's Christian life occurs at his conversion, and that his life before his conversion has been no more than sub-Christian. We have no right to imply this. There are instances of children who are aware of the presence of God and show fruits of the Spirit even in early childhood. Although they cannot master a catechism or give a public testimony to their faith, they have an inner relationship to Christ and their spiritual life is vivid and fruitful. Of such indeed is the kingdom of God (cf. Mk 10,14). We have no right to deny that they are God's children who have been born again. Perhaps when they are older their faith will be tested and they will undergo a conversion. But their conversion will not be the beginning of their Christian life. The moment of rebirth will have occurred much earlier. And since early childhood is not generally marked by any sudden spiritual transformation, the most likely moments for rebirth are physical birth or infant baptism.

The pattern of a man's spiritual development is more closely parallel to that of his physical, mental, and emotional development than is always admitted. In adolescence people often find it difficult to adjust themselves to their new capacities. Their faith may be shaken, and their spiritual growth may not keep pace with their growth in other ways. Often at this stage of life a young person undergoes a religious upheaval and is eventually converted. If he is temperamental, a mood of depression may follow the elation of conversion, and several conversions may be experienced over a period of years. Perhaps the young convert, in a moment of sober reflection, may wonder when his Christian life began and which conversion was the real beginning. His mistake is that he looks for the beginning of his Christian life in an experience which he can remember. Rebirth need not be a memorable experience. We do not remember the experience of our physical birth; nor need we remember what happened when we were born again.

This is not to belittle the conversions which occur in later life. Those who have been born again in infancy face a spiritual crisis sooner or later. A child who has shown a simple faith and been alive to the presence of God will pass through a time of testing in which his new capacities will have to be consecrated to God. If a child has made little or no spiritual progress since his baptism, the change which he should experience at conversion will be all the more radical. But these decisions and conversions, although they may be the most memorable events in a person's religious life, are not its beginning.

A second argument in support of the link between regeneration and infant baptism is that infant baptism declares that regeneration is God's work and not man's. If regeneration occurs in or before infant baptism, it is truly analogous to physical birth, because it is something which happens to the person who is born and not something which he decides to do. It is the work of God, not of the person baptized. It declares the prevenient love of God, a love which is

active before a man responds to it. Believers' baptism also can declare this prevenient love, but infant baptism declares it more surely.

A third argument is that infant baptism adequately declares the forgiveness of sins, which is an element of regeneration. Infant baptism is not as closely linked to repentance as believers' baptism is. Nevertheless, it declares God's forgiveness for the sins of those who repent. As Calvin says, the child is baptized 'for future repentance and faith', for a sacrament may legitimately have a future reference. The greater strength of infant baptism is that it points clearly to God's forgiveness of original sin.

The traditional doctrine is that in infant baptism God remits the guilt of original sin, and that without baptism a child remains condemned. The fault of the traditional theory is that it limits the grace of God by assuming that forgiveness is mediated only through baptism. The traditional theory does not err in claiming that a child is born sinful. From our earliest days we have a tendency to sin, and our sins need to be remitted before we can have life with God. This remission, however, is not effected, as the traditional theory claims, in baptism. God's mercy is not limited in such a way. Baptism does not effect forgiveness. It declares that God is already forgiving the sins which the child unwittingly commits.

A fourth reason for connecting regeneration with infant baptism is that when we are born again, we are born into a family. Now when regeneration is linked with conversion, the chief emphasis is on the individual's relationship to God. In infant baptism the chief emphasis is on the child's entry into a divine community. The child enters into the spiritual family. He dies to sin, not because of his own repentance, but because he has been set within the Church which is the body of Him who died to sin. He rises to new life, not because of his own moral and spiritual renewal, but because he has entered into the body of Him who rose from the dead. According to this theory, regeneration stands essentially for incorporation into the Church. This is not merely a change of status; it is a change of environment, and therefore a real change.

If regeneration is to be thus linked with infant baptism, there are two times at which the new birth can actually occur. One is the moment of physical birth and the other is the moment of baptism. If a child does not have a Christian home, then he does not enter into the new life until he is set within the sphere of the Church. In a community which practises infant baptism, his new birth will occur at the time of his baptism. But if a child has a Christian home, does the regeneration take place at physical birth? Paul claims that the children of believing parents are 'holy' (1 Cor 7₁₄). This could mean that they were already born again. If this were so, infant baptism would declare that such children were born again but would not actually be the moment of their regeneration.

The spiritual family is larger, however, than the physical family, and it can be argued that the rebirth of a child does not take place until he has been set within the family of the Church. The believing parent ought to hasten to place his child within this larger family, whose Father is God. When this happens, and in normal circumstances it will happen at infant baptism, there is a case for claiming that the child has been born again.

From this examination of the idea of regeneration certain conclusions emerge. The metaphor of regeneration by its very nature must refer to the beginning of

the Christian life. If a man is converted who has not been baptized and not been within the family of the Christian Church, then he should receive believers' baptism and his rebirth takes place either when he is converted or when he is baptized. If a child is brought up in the Christian Church, his Christian life begins in infancy. His regeneration does not take place when he is converted but long before either at physical birth or in baptism. For such a child the appropriate method of initiation is the sacrament of infant baptism.

Regeneration, therefore, ought not to be linked automatically with conversion. Regeneration stands essentially for God's acceptance of men into the life of the body of Christ. When children are brought up in the Church, their conversion ought not to be regarded as the beginning of their Christian life but as an important, perhaps the most important, stage in the process of spiritual growth. Conversion for such children is a fruit of the Spirit, and must be clearly distinguished from regeneration.

INCORPORATION INTO THE CHURCH: BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

Benjamin Drewery

THE PROBLEM raised by the rites of incorporation into the Church is a sharp and serious one, which I might well have declined to answer as being in many communions *sub iudice* at the present moment. Indeed, it has always been *sub iudice*, in the Western Church at least, since baptism and confirmation were separated, the former taking place usually in infancy, and the latter at ages varying from the seventh year (as often in Roman Catholicism) to the years of adolescence or later.

The problem is this: If baptism is the rite, seal, sign, symbol, token (whatever we call it) of incorporation into the Church, what significance is left for the later rite of confirmation? They both have to do (it is agreed) with membership of the Church; but surely you are either a member or not a member. If, then, you have been baptized, what can confirmation add? And if your Church subjects its adolescents to 'Public Reception into Church Membership' (which is more or less the Free Church equivalent of confirmation), are you not implying that their baptism as babies was not such a reception? Indeed, many Free Churchmen (no

doubt quite wrongly) have been 'received into membership' without being baptized. Is their membership in some way deficient, and ought they to be baptized now? If not, does this mean that baptism does not greatly matter?

No doubt those of us who have been fortunate enough to have been born of Christian parents who saw to it that we graduated through every step of our heavenly ladder—baptism, Sunday School, Church Membership training class, membership reception service, regular attendance at worship and partaking of Holy Communion—may not feel this question of the relative significance of our various 'steps' to be of more than academic importance. We have always belonged to the Church and (God willing) always shall. But we are growing less and less typical of our age; and the moment we look at what in fact happens all around us, these questions clamour for an answer. Infant baptism is far too often a dead end (as far as we can see). The parents bring their children to be 'done', for conventional and superstitious motives. Perhaps our minister is a 'rigorist' who will, when such is obviously the case, refuse to baptize. We vaguely feel he is being a little harsh; but what in fact is the child missing? And if, in such cases, the minister does baptize, what has the child received? Membership of the Church? Incorporation into the Body of Christ? A guarantee that he will go to heaven, even if he never again enters a church or breathes the name of Christ as long as he lives?

Or again, a minister has trained a keen youngster for 'Church Membership', 'received' him with all due ceremony, and guided him into active participation in the worship and fellowship of the Church. A year later the lad comes up with a sad story: he finds he has been misinformed on this matter of his baptism. His mother has suddenly remembered that she was ill at the time and never got him baptized at all. Should he be baptized now? What possible difference could it make, when he is already *in* the Church in every possible way, and has been for over a year?

A whole new set of difficulties arises when we bring in an additional factor—conversion. An Anglican college chaplain was addressing the Oxford John Wesley Society some time ago, and he illustrated what he conceived to be the difference between an Anglican and a Methodist by their 'typical' answers' to the question, 'How do you know you are a Christian?' An Anglican would say, 'Have you been baptized?'; a Methodist, 'Have you been converted?'. There is truth in this, and if what Brunner and others are always telling us about the 'Divine Encounter' is to be taken seriously, the Methodist can make a strong case. If the decisive moment in the life of any Christian has been that passing from darkness into light, that cataclysmic 'shaking of the foundations' when we stand helpless and hopeless and the Living Christ takes us for His own, surely *that* is the determining moment of 'incorporation into Christ', and therefore into the Church which is His Body. And even if, though our own conversion be 'instantaneous', we only recognize it as such at a later period—even if (in spite of the late Dr Maltby) it is not instantaneous at all—surely without it both baptism and confirmation are naked and meaningless. A young person in my own Church Membership class last year asked me at what point conversion was 'supposed to come in'. He was not aware of conversion hitherto. Would it happen at the reception service? And if it never happened at all, would that matter particularly if he remained (as he intended) a loyal Church Member all his life?

In seeking an answer to this formidable complex of problems, I have found it helpful to remember two complementary principles which offer at least a firm standpoint from which to grapple with them. The first was the recurrent theme-song of Dr Maltby: the Gospel, and with it the Christian life which it makes possible, is throughout and at every point *offer* and not *demand*. Even if it comes clothed as a demand ('Love so amazing, so divine, *demands . . .*') the clothing is but a disguise; every such requirement turns out in the end to be in reality a means of grace. Christian dogma, for example, is no mere burden on our credulity; it is an opening of the windows of our mind, through which God offers the free pouring of His light. Christian ethics are no mere burdens on the conscience; they are descriptions of the pattern of life that God offers us as the fruits of His revelation in Christ. And even so, I should add, Christian sacraments, rites, ordinances are no mere legalistic qualifications or conditions of the code of Christian salvation; they are strictly 'means of grace'—God's offer, God's utterly undeserved favours, the signs and seals of His love.

The second is an equally emphatic theme-song of Karl Barth—an old saying which he quotes in the form, 'God has bound us, but not Himself, to the signs of His revelation'. 'Not Himself . . .'—of course! How obvious! And yet if we accept that, several problems, such as the fate of infants who die unbaptized, vanish at a touch. But He *has* bound us. We are in no position to bargain with God for His unmerited grace. We cannot treat His ordinances, such as baptism, as optional extras, on the principle that what God really wants from us is the 'good life'. And we cannot treat lightly our incorporation into the Church which is His Body, on the principle that such incorporation is not a legalistic requirement, and that God in any case will find some other way of taking us to heaven. 'Love God and do what you like'—yes, but Augustine's whole point is that if you do love God, what you like will be what He likes. In our better moments we do not need telling this; our conduct is intuitively Christian, even if we must remain aware that at every point we stand totally indebted to God's grace. In our worse moments we must remember that pensioners living on the King's Bounty cannot expect to prescribe how much they are to get, and when and where: the King has told us of His will in the matter, and that is sufficient. Hence, for example, the boy who discovers after confirmation that he was never baptized, even if it seems that baptism has 'nothing to add', will in all loyalty remember that 'God has bound us, even if not Himself . . .', and offer himself for baptism for this if for no other reason.

What is the relation of baptism to confirmation, as regards membership of the Church? 'Confirmation is the rite whereby the grace of the Holy Spirit is conveyed *in a new or fuller way* to those who have already received it *in some degree or fashion* at Baptism', says the new *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*; 'some regard it as an integral part of, and in its effects indistinguishable from, Baptism. Others regard it as conveying a new gift of the Spirit, especially the grace necessary to strengthen the candidate in his conflict with evil.' A. J. Mason distinguished between the gift of forgiveness and regeneration by the Holy Spirit *from without* (baptism), and the gift of the Holy Spirit's personal *indwelling* (confirmation). The Methodist Order distinguishes between reception into the congregation of Christ's flock (baptism) and welcoming into the fellowship of Christ's Church. We commonly speak of our Reception Service as the

occasion when we are received into 'full' membership, the implication being that baptismal membership is a kind of half-way house, deficient or incomplete. Or we speak of the former as the response of what is now conscious and personal faith, confirming what was done on our behalf, on the strength of the faith of our parents and the Church, when we were baptized. Baptism is 'potential' membership, which may or may not be 'realized'. Baptism is the initiation of a process which culminates in confirmation. Christians must 'become' (confirmation) what they already 'are' (baptism).

Some of these distinctions seem very dubious. I do not understand how the congregation of Christ's flock differs from Christ's Church; and I do not see how forgiveness and *regeneration* can be contrasted with the working of the Holy Spirit within us. Above all, quantitative or even qualitative partitions of grace seem to degrade what is a personal relationship between God and man into a commodity that can be weighed or priced; hence I should not speak of 'a fuller way,' 'in some degree or fashion', 'full membership', etc. We are on firmer ground when we speak of confirmation as the laying hold by faith on what was given to the infant in baptism on the faith of others—although such language tends to import a false contrast between God's work (baptism) and our work (confirmation). The conscious response of faith, the confirming, is just as much the working of God within us—just as truly the divine initiative and divine enabling—as is baptism, the sacrament most obviously 'objective', most clearly declaratory (as Bernard Manning taught us) of preventer grace, of grace granted us without our merits and even without our knowledge.

Baptism marks the calling by God of the child (or the man) into the community of the Church of Christ on earth, the Church for which Christ died and rose again, the Church which is at once the object and the instrument of God's grace and God's purpose—the object, in that its life flows from God's constant re-enactment in the Holy Spirit of that seminal victory over sin and death which was achieved by Christ on the Cross, the instrument, in that God arms and marshals it for the salvation of the world. Baptism is the 'acted parable' of that bestowal of the Holy Spirit which enables us to die and rise again with Christ and thus to be cleansed and liberated from sin—of that divine provision for the bringing home of the gospel to *us*, His chosen soldiers and servants of the Kingdom in our day and place.

In this Church (not out of it, as a strict doctrine of believers' baptism would imply) are children and newborn babies. They can have little or no conscious faith; but baptism is God's offer of a station in His army, in the company of a worshipping community which thus solemnly hails the newcomer as a recruit to its ranks, and commits itself to guiding him by faith and love into a growingly conscious understanding and receptivity of God's forgiving and enabling grace. As the child grows up, he will increasingly lay hold in faith on what was done for him once and for all at baptism, and God will one day call him, through the Holy Spirit, to public and solemn profession in the Church that he knowingly and with full conviction accepts the station marked out for him when he was baptized. This profession is no mere duty or even response; it is itself a 'means of grace' (sacrament or no), an unearned privilege which opens a whole world of blessings and a life perpetually cleansed and renewed.

But—the child on becoming capable of conscious reflection may reject the

motives and implications of the baptism which was administered to him. The Church must then ask itself seriously and searchingly whether it has itself been at fault—through inadequate teaching or caring. But the future in any case belongs to God. 'He is not bound, although we are . . .'. Such a child, once baptized, can never be exactly as if he had never been, even though he may repudiate the Church and disown God. He is always a member of the Church—even if he denies it. God *has* made an entry into his life, and some day, at God's good pleasure, He will come again. There may be as yet but a vacuum in his life where faith should be; but it is a God-shaped vacuum, because he was once baptized; and one day that vacuum will be filled.

But—the baptism may have been merely 'conventional', and parents may never intend that its implications should be implemented. I ask again, Does the Church heed its own task? Baptism has at least given the Church an entry; it can show by its constant interest and concern that it seeks the good of all the children committed to its care; and I have personally known no parents whatsoever, however merely superstitious their own motives were in having the child baptized, who forbade such care and interest. Supposing, however, the doors *are* shut and the Church sees the child no more. Even so 'God is not bound. . .'. The child is still a member, even all unbeknowing, of His Church. God has this further 'mark of entry' into the life of every baptized child. Who knows but that one day the latent mark of baptism may not be the means of a conscious questioning, of the realization of a desperate need, of God's subsequent re-entry? We cannot limit God to the means and signs we are privileged to accept ourselves; nor can we limit Him to the bounds of this world and this life.

What, then, of conversion? We must not forget the saying of Jesus in Matthew 18₃: 'Except ye be converted and become as little children . . .', and perhaps we may link this with the suggestion of Cullmann and others that when the Gospel tradition tells of Jesus blessing the children and telling the disciples to 'forbid' them not, it was motivated by an already existing controversy about the baptism of infants, 'forbid' being a technical term in the pre-baptismal questions and answers of the early Church. In other words, one essential prerequisite of conversion is just that realization of utter dependence on God which claims no more for itself than does the helpless and utterly dependent child at baptism. Such a realization may come in some later year as a flash of lightning, but it illuminates a road that since baptism we have been steadily taking. Environment—that is, the love and care of Christian parents or friends, of the Church; natural development in Christian graces; growing experience of that service of God which is perfect freedom; increasing apprehension of the grace of God in prayer and worship—this is the world into which baptism has initiated us, and a sudden 'conversion' experience may but illuminate in a new and startling revelation the grace which was ours already. Such an experience may precede, accompany, or follow 'confirmation'; it is a gift of God, and is given as He wills. It may be given us many times over. It may indeed initiate our Christian life and provide our first leading towards the Church; the image need only be adjusted to that of the lightning that points *away from* our present path, and such a conversion would naturally be followed by baptism and confirmation.

But supposing there is no conversion at all. What reality is then left for

baptism and confirmation? Are they more than pieces of empty ritual, especially abhorrent to those whose traditional emphasis is on experience and the inner witness of the Spirit? If such a 'limiting case' could be imagined, where the whole pageant of Christian initiation from baptism to 'full communion'—in its latter stages at least with voluntary profession of faith and overt witness to the world—had left no trace of conviction whatsoever, had never carried with it one fleeting suspicion of man's need, man's sin, God's grace—then the point could be conceded. But who are we to assert this of anyone? Who are we to know and judge the secrets of another's spiritual life? Who are we to call in question the whole grand scheme of divine initiation because of our presumptuous denigration of a brother? And even if we should in his case have stumbled upon the truth, who are we to preclude the Almighty from future harvesting of the seeds sown in baptism and confirmation? 'I do not ask to see The distant scene: one step enough for me.' Newman never wrote a word so wise. In baptism and confirmation we are on holy ground. We learn, we receive, we respond. Some day we shall see Him face to face—and then we shall know, even as we are known.

'INDISCRIMINATE'¹ BAPTISM?

W. D. Stacey

SHOULD WE BAPTIZE the children of parents who disregard the duty of public worship, show no evidence of New Testament faith, reveal a mournful ignorance of the meaning of the rite and, as far as one can see, have no intention of carrying out its obligations? That is the problem before us, and it is far more complex than at first appears. A number of learned books have appeared since the war on the subject of baptism and they differ radically. Two Anglicans, Dom Gregory Dix and Professor G. W. H. Lampe, are at variance over the import of the New Testament and patristic evidence. Three continental scholars, Karl Barth, Oscar Cullmann and Pierre Marcel, reach the most diverse conclusions. It is small wonder then that even the much-read and much-appreciated volume of W. F. Flemington has not achieved universal acceptance. Nor is this merely an academic problem. Every minister in pastoral practice finds himself explaining a service (in regard to which he may himself have difficulties) to parents whose attitude varies from superstition to downright boredom. The Church of England is probably in greater difficulties here than the Free Churches, but nominal Christianity is to be found everywhere, and if the number of ministers who are bold enough (and clear enough) to refuse outright is small, there are many who have doubts.

This article will contend that no child brought by the parents in apparent good faith should be refused baptism. The opposite view, however, has so much logic on its side that it merits very serious consideration.

Marcel argues that infant baptism should be confined to the children of believers. It should be refused unless 'at least one of the child's parents avows belief in the Lord's promise'.² Churches that have departed from this rule bear a 'heavy responsibility'. Baptism for Marcel is the sign of the new covenant as circumcision was the sign of the old. Entry into this new covenant is either by conversion or by birth. It is as absurd, therefore, to baptize children whose parents are strangers to the covenant as it would have been to circumcise Gentile children whose parents were neither proselytes nor God-fearers. 'The faith of the Church cannot make up for the absence of faith in the parents'.³ This is a powerful argument. The emphasis of all Christian Churches on family worship and a Christian environment in the home underlines Marcel's point. If the parents are unbelievers, how can the child grow up in the covenant? And should the sign be given if the probability is that the thing signified will never become a reality? Certainly one must agree with Flemington that in such cases the significance of baptism is impaired and the growth of 'false and mechanical ideas' encouraged.⁴ Other arguments leap to the mind. Promises made in a solemn, sacramental service ought to be binding. Is it not, then, an offence to God and a disservice to the parents to allow vows to be taken if we fear that they are being taken lightly? However conscientious we are as pastors, we know that many of the children we baptize will not grow up in the fellowship of the Church. What then is the purpose of a sign of initiation into the Church? For those who regard the rite as primarily a dedication even stronger arguments are available. How can anyone dedicate his child who has not dedicated himself? The central act of the service is then a piece of insincerity.

In the Methodist Book of Offices the baptismal service begins with a reaffirmation of the promises of God towards children (1). The congregation is urged to believe that 'He will likewise favourably receive this little child' and that He 'will give unto him the Holy Spirit'. Except by implication, the Preface does not relate these promises specifically to the rite of baptism. There follows the assertion that the parents are about to dedicate their child to God, (2)—and, appropriately, they make their vows (3), vows which make no sense at all in the mouths of unbelievers. The Church then makes its promise to maintain a 'fellowship of worship and service' in which the child may grow up (4). Prayer is offered for the child, the home and the parents (5), and the child is named (6). After the sacrament itself, (7) the minister declares, 'We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, that he may be instructed. . . .' This incorporation (8) has been variously interpreted. According to the Methodist Statement on Holy Baptism, 1952 (p.2), it involves reception into 'the household of the faith' and into 'the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church'. A blessing (9) on the child and further prayer (10) conclude the service.

In this outline, items 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 10 raise no problems at all even with the children of atheists. Items 2 and 3 are incongruous unless the parents believe and practise the Faith. Items 7 and 8, the crux of the whole matter, will sway the argument according to the interpretation put upon them. It is worth noting here that the problem we are investigating brings us face to face with the real

issue in infant baptism. If dedication is primary, then indiscriminate baptism is indefensible. Indeed, the practice can only be defended at all if the sacrament is basically a sign of God's gracious love to all mankind. Items 7 and 8 must now be further investigated.

Baptism must be understood against the background of the whole Gospel. The sacraments are not alien to the Gospel, nor are they decorative additions to add life and movement to our services. They represent the Gospel dramatically with a realism that is beyond words. Nothing is more fundamental to the Gospel than the fact that God moves first and man subsequently responds. It follows that baptism is primarily an act of God. Its chief significance will lie, not in the dubious reactions of the child nor in the vows of the parents, but in the promises God makes and the grace He bestows. Nor must we imagine that the sacrament concerns the child alone. The celebration of a sacrament may concern individuals, but the truth expressed in it is for the whole world. God speaks in baptism, not only to the recipient, but to everyone present, and ultimately to everyone who hears that through the Church Christ still commands the children to be brought to Him. Discussion of the precise import of the sacrament for the individual child will not therefore provide the complete answer and may even be misleading. The implications of baptism as a universal act must also be considered.

In baptism God gives Himself to the child and also claims the child for His own. Just as the creation of physical life remains an act of sovereign love, though it cannot possibly meet with immediate, grateful response, so the initiation of spiritual life is unaffected by the inability of the child to respond. God's actions are not conditioned by our responses. He receives the child into the covenant relationship in which all His gifts of grace can subsequently be given. The water of baptism is a pledge of one of the greatest of these gifts—forgiveness and renewal. Except for those few Christians who react against any tangible and material expression of the Faith, reception into a covenant relationship will also mean incorporation into the visible Church. The child, born into a world of many religions and much unbelief, is received in a Christian Church, dedicated to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with prayer and solemn vows, signed with a Christian sacrament, and added to the baptismal roll. It is not suggested that membership of the Church by baptism is complete, nor that it ensures salvation, nor that it renders conversion unnecessary. But it is real membership, and parents, minister, and people should bend every effort to ensure that in time it is willingly ratified.

It is important to realize that God's action is not dependent upon anything that may happen in the future. He establishes the relationship. He makes the promise. The child is sealed in His name. The great beginning may come to nothing, but subsequent disaster cannot annul the fact that God has acted. There can be no doubt that the covenant thus begun is not always fully realized. Some baptized children will grow up to choose unbelief and rebellion. They will break the covenant relationship and attempt to eradicate whatever effects remain of Christian influence upon them. In such cases the purpose of baptism is frustrated. The promise of gifts of grace is never taken up and the covenant relationship will become as though it never existed. Deplorable as these defections are, they provide no grounds for withholding baptism. To contend that they

do is to attack the fundamentals of the Gospel. God's love for the human race existed before creation. Christ died for us long before we were born. While we were still in the womb, the Holy Spirit was at work to provide the environment into which we were born. What we subsequently do may reveal base ingratitude, but it cannot undo the creation nor alter God's loving assault upon man. Similarly, however shameful it may be to reject the offer of grace made to us in baptism, it cannot mean that the offer should not have been made.

To turn now from the individual aspect to the universal, God not merely receives, but proclaims that He receives. He not merely promises, but advertises the promise. The baptism of infants declares that God's answer to the present evil world is the creation of a new Israel, sheltered and protected by Him, into which all are welcomed. The covenant of the New Israel, like that of the old, is established on divine initiative, and no merit whatever is necessary as a qualification. Subsequent response will be required—indeed, will be inevitable—if the relationship remains intact. But that is the consequence of the covenant, not its ground. Children are received into the New Israel because they are members of the human race and objects of God's love, and because they have not wilfully resisted Him. Such a reversal of normal standards is this that one might almost say that children are more suitable for the covenant than adults. They are not weighed down with the worldly wisdom that dulls adult receptivity. God grasps more easily those who are too young to struggle. Thus infant baptism witnesses to the true nature of the Gospel, to its 'objective givenness', to the fact that it is centred in the gracious activity of God.

Since baptism is entrance into a personal relationship, its meaning is not limited to what takes place in the service. More than any other service the sacrament of baptism is forward-looking. God's promise calls for faithful response. In the service itself the response can only come from parents, godparents and the Christian community, and this vicarious response is not to be overlooked, but the real fulfilment only comes with the growing faith of the child himself. Not until he has avowed his own faith and proved it and persevered in Christian worship and service, not until the baptismal symbol of washing has been realized again and again, not until God has been able to add to His first pledge greater and greater pledges and the power to accept them, not until the baptized person enters at last into the resurrection life, can the baptismal drama be said to be complete. Then the redemptive act will have run its course and every promise of God will have been realized.

From this, several reasons for 'indiscriminate' baptism emerge. First, in receiving all children regardless of the faith of their parents we are repeating what Christ Himself did in His earthly life (Mk 9₃₆, 10₁₄). The grace of God is for all men, Christ died for all, and all children have, therefore, as their birth-right free admittance into the realm of grace. To refuse baptism when it is requested is to attempt to restrict the grace of God. Secondly, the sacrament preaches the evangelical Gospel, and the less virtuous the parents are the less chance there is of confusion as to where the real initiative lies. This sacrament demonstrates to society with water rather than words that Christ came to save not the righteous, but the whole race. Thirdly, presence at the sacrament can be a means of grace to the parents. They are obliged to hear, even to study the service. They are obliged to make vows that put strange words into their

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mouths. They are obliged to offer and receive back their child. They are obliged to see at close quarters the sacramental act. Without suggesting that there is anything magical in this service, it does seem reasonable to suggest that it may sometimes move the onlookers. Fourthly, 'indiscriminate' baptism provides a lesson for the congregation. The Church is a restless society, ill at ease while so many remain outside. It has a perpetual obligation, not to consume its energy in meetings and efforts and fellowship, but to seek the lost. Every baptism where a strange child is brought in is a reminder of our primary purpose. Fifthly, for every minister a request from strangers is an opportunity. Here is a chance to go into their home, to put forward the Gospel (there can be no evasion in the conversation on either side), to bring them to church. Further, there is the absolute right and duty to return. These last three reasons would not stand without the support of the theological argument, but their practical importance should not be minimized.

How indiscriminate then should baptism be? Where the parents request the rite and accept with apparent sincerity the various disciplines laid down by the minister, I believe we have no grounds to refuse. The difficulty of assessing the sincerity of parents is recognized even by Marcel for whom the assessment is vital. Despite all attempts to formulate conditions, he has to fall back in the end on the 'charitable judgement' of the minister (*op. cit.*, p.232).⁵ Some will feel more confident in this matter than others, but it is not, in my submission, a matter in which one should rely on a 'hunch' or on character-reading. Many of the parents of whom we are thinking and who are sometimes called non-Christian have been baptized themselves, have never disavowed their faith and present their children freely. Deplorable as their misunderstanding of Christian duty may be, they have not cut themselves off entirely from the Holy Spirit, and the Gospel in word and deed is there if they wish it. If this seems to place the exceeding grace of God at the mercy of the cold and the careless, then it simply reiterates what God has done Himself in the Incarnation. In the case where one parent is an avowed unbeliever and the other requests baptism, it seems to me that every argument favours proceeding. Difficulty arises when the insincerity of the parents is flagrant and well known and when, consequently, vows made by them in Church would be a public scandal. In such a case the ill effects of proceeding on the public at large would outweigh the good effects outlined above. Refusal is, therefore, inevitable. Is the child, therefore, to lose? Inevitably from our point of view the child loses through being brought up in a faithless home, but there is nothing in our doctrine of baptism that suggests that this is the only way that God offers His gifts to little children. We say only that this is the way that was ordained by Christ and has been hallowed by experience. Parents of this kind are unlikely to request baptism unless they are importuned. For this reason, and because it brings the Church into disrepute, touting for baptisms is to be discouraged.

The 1952 Methodist statement deals carefully with the practical side of this matter. There is no need to repeat its recommendations. We need only note how widely spread are the responsibilities incurred in this service. The minister has a responsibility first to instruct the Church in the meaning of baptism and to relate it to the Gospel. The paucity of sermons on this subject, reflecting no doubt a general theological uncertainty, is a source of weakness. Again, he must

instruct the parents, insist on a worthy celebration *during public worship*, and continue the contact afterwards. The parents have a responsibility to amend their lives, renew their faith and fulfil their vows. The child has a responsibility to confirm his entry into the covenant by repeated acts of consecration, including, of course, the deliberate accepting of membership. The Church has a responsibility to exercise pastoral care and to train the child, thus keeping its vow though the parents may break theirs. If, every time we baptized a strange child, all these responsibilities were fully borne, this matter would not constitute a problem.

¹ The word is infelicitous, but it is difficult to think of a better. It is used throughout this article in the sense implied in the first sentence.

² P. Marcel, *The Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism*, p. 234.

³ *ibid.*, p.234.

⁴ W. F. Flemington, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, p.144.

⁵ It is significant that, apart from this reference, Marcel appears to be thinking only of the obvious Christian on one hand and the obvious unbeliever on the other—a manifest oversimplification. See pp.234f.

JOHN FINNEY, FORGOTTEN PREACHER

D. Dunn Wilson

ON THE EDGE of the Delamere Forest, near Winsford in Cheshire, stands the little village of Over. There, in 1823, was born John Finney, one of the forgotten men of nineteenth-century Nonconformity.

The Finneys were a large, poor family, and John, the oldest surviving son, had to start work when he was no more than ten years old. In his own words, he 'did not take kindly to the craft of St Crispin', and soon left his father's cobbler's shop to work on a local farm. His father was a 'singer in the church and a favourite at the vicarage'; his mother was a local woman with strong Methodist connexions. In spite of this background and of his parents' determined efforts to give 'Jack' a Christian upbringing, by the age of sixteen he was already tainted with the sins of his neighbourhood, 'which could excel in Drinking, fighting, poaching & gambling'.

Then, in 1839, he broke free from the strong influence of his father and became a boiler-maker in Ellesmere Port. He threw restraint to the winds and swallowed in every kind of sin and licence. Within a few months his wildness brought down upon him the wrath of his master; leaving all his possessions behind him, he fled from his lodgings and came home to Over.

His parents were heart-broken to find him a changed man; he himself tells us that he had 'got to the top of the tree for singing & Public house drolery', and that he 'was noted for a nother evil viz. drinking a great quantity & not be drunk'. During the local fights between ruffians, the cry invariably was, 'Fetch Jack Finney,' and, after one such fight he was brought before a magistrate and fined heavily. Again and again he promised to mend his ways, but all in vain; the attraction of the 'wake' and the 'pothouse' was too great.

Finney records three landmarks on his journey towards conversion. The first was an incident in which he became involved with two pickpockets. By the time Finney realized the nature of his companions, he had become implicated in their crimes, and fear gripped him. He says, 'I thought I should have fallen to the earth. I trembled visibly. I feared that the police were on our track & that I should be dragged to prison as a theif & pickpocket.' Finney was not transformed overnight, but it is clear from his Journal that this 'depth of infamy' as he calls it, suddenly made him aware of the kind of life he was leading.

The second landmark of his journey was the sudden upsurge of a morbid fear of death which had long haunted him. It reached a climax one day while he was hunting in the fields. He says that he was seized 'with a pain in my bowels & with the idea that I was going to die & Death appeared before me in a more terrifying form than ever. I thought I shall be dead & in hell in a short time.' The terror continued with him long after the incident, but it was at this moment that his hidden fears of death and hell crystallized and made themselves felt with devastating distinctness.

The third stage of Finney's pilgrimage was marked by the influence of his

father's brother. The young Finney had a hunger in his soul for true religion, but his Christian acquaintances seemed to be afraid to speak to him about spiritual matters. He says: 'I often came in contact with believers but they kept it to them selves, they little thought how easy I could be knocked down if spoke to about religion.' Yet one man was not afraid to speak to this wild young rake who was so universally feared in the neighbourhood. John Finney's uncle had a great liking for his renegade nephew and 'used to speak very kindly but firmly' to him. John's father, whom the young man feared and yet loved, laid the foundation for his son's reformation, but it was the lad's uncle who was the instrument of his conviction.

At this point in John Finney's story, there occurs one of many tantalizing gaps in his Journal; we can only surmise that, when next we meet him in Liverpool, he had gone there looking for work as a boiler-maker. This break in the narrative is doubly tantalizing because, during this same period of his life, a miraculous transformation came over John Finney. We leave him as a raw and belligerent youth, just beginning to feel the working of the Holy Spirit in his life, and we discover him, in Liverpool, as a mature and utterly consecrated Christian.

If, indeed, he had come to Liverpool to pursue his trade of boiler-making, he cannot have done so for any great length of time, because in 1863 he has taken up a post as caretaker and missioner at Richmond Hall, an independent mission controlled by a Mr Pennell. Here begins the second chapter of his life, and Finney begins to give us a day-by-day account of his doings. Each hour is filled with activity; each secret thought is entrusted to paper, and we see John Finney as he really was.

The outstanding feature, manifest on every page of the Journal, is the man's tremendous capacity for hard work. Each Saturday would find him cleaning the Hall and preparing it for the following day's services. He tackled this work as caretaker with the same devotion as he brought to every task he undertook.

He describes a typical Sunday's work, which began with a service at 7 a.m.; three meetings followed between the end of that service and morning worship at 10.45 a.m. In the evening there was another meeting, followed by a Love-feast and prayer-meeting. This was not an exceptional day for Finney, who was 'up and at it by seven o'clock' every morning, and who was usually awake at 5.0 a.m., praying and reading his Bible before the day's work began. In 1864 he records that he conducted no less than 422 meetings in a single year.

He was constantly involved in visiting all who needed him, and he gives exact facts and figures about his labours because his Journals were carefully read by his employer, Mr Pennell. In the year 1864 he declares: 'I have visited 2864 families and these have not been sham visits. Some of them have cost me much walking & labour & many times I have walked a day & not been able to visit more than 4 families though called at a many houses but they have been out, so that has counted nothing.' These figures do not include repeated visits to the same families, for, Finney says, 'if I am called to visit a family 10 times a week, I only count one for it is families that we count not visits'.

Finney was always expanding his boundaries, and he visited people of any denomination or of none. The poor people for miles around would send for him when there was trouble in their homes and often he would be called out late at night to visit some sick or dying person. The common saying, when there

was hardship in the house, was, 'Send for Mr Finney!' The children knew him and loved him; they would stop him in the streets, and he was never too busy to talk to them very simply about the things of God.

The neighbourhood in which Finney found himself was a squalid one. Poverty, disease, and vice were rife in the dingy streets which surrounded Richmond Hall and, wherever there was want, there was Finney. He begged clothing, food, mattresses, and furniture for the poor, and he walked for hours among the filthy tenements and lodging-houses, distributing the necessities of life. When a poor woman died in childbirth through neglect, Finney descended like an avenging angel upon the ladies' charitable society whose doctor had been so criminally negligent. The missioner fought for the rights of these poor people with as much determination as he wrestled for their souls.

No man could have been more conscious of his call to preach, or have held a higher conception of the preacher's task. Often he would be working at a sermon throughout the night, struggling with each phrase, weighing each sentence. He was a severe critic of his own preaching and of the preaching of others. He declared that he 'felt the weight of preaching', and he had no patience with preachers who showed a less conscientious approach to their calling. He had no qualms about condemning a sermon as 'the worst effort ever heard' or 'a repulsive address', but he was equally generous in his praise of sermons that moved him.

His own preaching was vivid and impassioned, and some idea of the power of his sermons may be gained from the effect which they had upon his congregations. Once more his accurate records give us an idea of his success from a numerical standpoint. In 1864, he declares that his labours included 'Meetings attended 422, addresses given 168, professed to be blessed under my labours 141'. These figures are given with the same blunt honesty as those describing his other labours during that year. Finney was not a slave to statistics, but the records demanded by his employers forced him to keep an accurate account of his successes and his failures. He records the latter with great frankness and he is constantly bemoaning his inadequacy and lack of devotion.

Nevertheless, the Journals revealed Finney as a man who walked with God in the greatest intimacy. Not a step was taken until God's guidance had been sought. The failures, triumphs, encouragements, and difficulties of Finney's ministry were all laid before his Master; he spent many a day in fasting and many a long night in prayer. It was this inner communion with God which gave him the strength for his labours and enabled him to press relentlessly towards the goal when difficulties and disillusionments had caused many of his associates to stumble in the way.

No obstacle was allowed to stand in the way of Finney's ministry; in the open air, he boldly withstood the catcalls of the hecklers and the disapproval of many sections of the local populace. He sometimes walked through the streets in order that he might stop those he met and engage them in spiritual conversation. Never did he take a journey by train without leaving the challenge of Christ with his fellow-travellers. Rain, hail, or shine, Finney would take his stand in the open air, even when his supporters were afraid to brave the storms. He never allowed an opportunity for challenging men and women to pass by unseized, so consumed was he by a passion for souls. He busied himself in the public houses,

the slum tenements, the streets, and the hospitals, everywhere spreading the Christian good news.

Inevitably his health suffered, and he was constantly weakened by feverish colds and disorders of the stomach. Often he would take his place in the pulpit or in the open air after having risen from his sick-bed and knowing that he would be forced to return to it when the meeting had ended. His wife also was seriously ill, and he was so poor that he scarcely knew where to find the money to pay for medicines and the children's clothes. There is no trace of spurious heroism in recording such hardships, no sign that Finney is excusing failure or seeking the praise of men.

It was as an independent missioner that Finney had gone to Richmond Hall to work for Mr Pennell, but he was not satisfied with the situation there. We must assume that Finney had found his spiritual home among the Primitive Methodists, because he makes it clear that he wanted Mr Pennell to place his independent mission-centres under the jurisdiction of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. He says that, ever since he had taken up his work, he had been confident 'that there should be a change in them & had faith to believe that one day they should become Primitive property & for this I have earnestly prayed & laboured'. On 4th August 1863 Finney's dream came true, and he writes triumphantly, 'we are turned over to the primitive methodists', and he rejoices in the fact that Pennell's decision to take this step applied, not only to Richmond Hall, but to the group of chapels that was associated with it.

On 1st January 1864 Finney writes with satisfaction: 'Last year I was a missionary under Mr Pennell, this I am a missionary for the Primitive Methodists, Praise the Lord!' Perhaps he had achieved one of his great aims in entering the employment of Mr Pennell. He remained at Richmond Hall long enough to ensure that the association with the Primitive Methodists was firmly cemented, and then, on 27th March 1866, he remarks in his Journal: 'Give notice to leave the circuit.' He had never been satisfied to limit his sphere of influence and, although his time had been fully occupied at the Hall, he had constantly been widening his boundaries. New cottage meetings sprang up throughout the area under his direction, and occasionally he travelled to neighbouring towns to conduct evangelistic missions.

Whatever the reasoning behind his decision, Finney decided to forsake his settled ministry and become a missioner travelling throughout the north-east of England. His home remained in Liverpool, but the next stage of his ministry had begun—he had become John Finney, the travelling evangelist.

By 1868 Finney's reputation had spread far and wide, and he received invitations to conduct missions in many different towns. He travelled throughout the countryside and managed to achieve a remarkable degree of unanimous support from the local Churches. Wesleyans, Primitives, Independents, and Baptists all seemed to forget their denominational differences, and rallied around this remarkable man. One of the high-lights of this part of Finney's life must have been his return to preach in the town hall at Winsford, the scene of the old Finney's escapades and the new Finney's transformation.

It is clear that he had not lost his old fire and enthusiasm in the pulpit, and it is noteworthy that he does not preach the same sermons repeatedly but still hammers out new sermons with the care and devotion displayed during his

settled ministry in Liverpool. He gave himself whole-heartedly to the work of preaching, and the people flocked to hear him, often travelling many miles on foot through the worst weather from outlying farms and distant villages. Finney's Journal abounds with stories of remarkable conversions, of notorious local ruffians coming to the meetings to mock but staying to pray, of men and women returning after meetings have ended because they were unable to go away without finding peace of heart, of great sinners and narrow-minded 'saints' filled with the love of Christ. Finney's utter devotion to the work of saving souls continues to blaze from every line of his Journal. At West Witton, he was so burdened that he rose in the early hours of the morning 'to pray for the town'.

Such a man might be attacked, but he could not be ignored. One old reprobate declared, 'He is an awful fellow that Finney, but he is right!' The utter sincerity of the man reached even his bitterest opponents, and they felt bound to silence him or follow him. One innkeeper attempted to have him arrested, but all in vain. The Christmas revels in his public house, like the Christmas sports and dance in the village, were unsupported because the local populace had gone to hear Finney preach. The police were sometimes needed to deal with the crowds that came to the services, and often the people, lifted to a height of spiritual experience unknown to them before, refused to leave when the meetings were over.

It must not be thought that Finney's missions were always successful in terms of vast numbers of open conversions. There were many black periods in his life during his itinerant ministry, when he encountered stubbornness and hypocrisy. Often he had to leave a town or village, wondering whether 'good had been done'. He was completely dependent upon the churches he served for the money to maintain himself and his family; yet sometimes, after he had worn himself out for a church or village, the local 'Christians' paid him very poorly or gave him nothing at all. Throughout it all, he was constantly anxious about his sick wife in Liverpool and the family he had left there. He returned to visit them as often as he could, but the longing for souls would eventually thrust him back into the itinerant work again, and he would set off once more to conduct another mission, with all its encouragements and disappointments.

We do not know why this remarkable and devoted man left his homeland and sailed for the New World. Perhaps the stories of his American grandparents influenced him, or perhaps he was prompted by the longing for a wider field in which to harvest the souls he sought. But whatever the reason, when he was over fifty years of age, Finney decided to undertake the great adventure, and he set sail for America. When he went, he entrusted his laboriously written Journals to his old friend, Mr Capstick of Garsdale. Perhaps this was symbolic of the fact that he wanted to take up his work in the New World, unhampered by old pain, old sorrows and old achievements.

At this point, John Finney passes into the unknown, having played a leading part on his small stage for a few short years. No words can sum up his influence or his mission better than a phrase he once wrote in his Journal. The remark was a casual one and yet, in it, his life and work are summed up. The words are simply, 'I love sinners'. Let them be his epitaph.

The information contained in this article has been drawn from Finney's

manuscript Journal, shown to the author by Mr E. Capstick of Low Bentham, the grandson of the Mr Capstick of Garsdale who is mentioned in the penultimate paragraph of the article.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF TOLERATION

W. W. Simpson

THE STATUS of dogs in a Paris hotel seems an unlikely starting-point for a discussion of toleration. In this particular instance, however, it had a certain relevance. The card I was given on registration contained, in addition to my room number, certain *informations*. Thoughtfully translated into English for the benefit of the mono-linguist British visitor, these *informations* included the following item: 'Dogs are tolerated in the hotel.'

Of what French original, I wondered, was 'tolerated' a translation? The problem was quickly solved. '*Les chiens ne sont admis à l'hôtel*', I read, '*que sous toute réserve*.' Even allowing for the limitations of my French, this struck me as being singularly uninviting. My sympathies were all with the dog!

For me, of course, the issue was purely academic. I had no dog. Nor was I likely to be in the hotel long enough to be worried by anyone else's. But at least it set me thinking. I remembered, for example, a 'definition' I had once heard of the three stages of toleration. The first is the protest against intolerance. The second is the demand for toleration. The third is the indignity of being tolerated. Certainly if 'being tolerated' means being regarded as the hotelier appeared to regard his potential canine guests, one has every sympathy with those who suffer such indignity. But does it? Or is there a possible alternative?

There are some people, no doubt, who if invited to translate the English into French might render it as: '*Les chiens sont admis à l'hôtel sans aucune réserve*'. Their attitude reflects, no doubt, a generous and open spirit. Its potential consequences, however, for man and dog alike, are too distressing to contemplate.

Here then is the dilemma which confronts, not merely a Paris hôtelier worried about dogs, but all who are concerned with problems of human relations in the modern world. Most people are agreed, in theory at least, that intolerance is a bad thing. Opinions differ widely, however, as to the meaning of toleration and still more as to what is involved in the practice of it.

There are problems of religious liberty for example on both side of 'the curtain', in totalitarian and communist, as well as democratic and capitalist societies. Christians in the 'West' are apt to think of Christians in 'the East' either as victims of intolerance or as 'fellow-travellers' in the sense of having come to terms with régimes which, while professing to grant religious liberty,

are basically anti-religious in their ideologies. At the same time—though we in 'the West' are slow to appreciate this—Christians in 'the East' not infrequently regard us as victims of a too easy-going tolerance on the part of states which appear to care little one way or another what a man believes. It is taken for granted that we have 'come to terms' with capitalism and with a form of materialism more insidious and debilitating in its effects than the dialectical materialism of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Moreover, the problem of religious toleration concerns the relations not only between the religious bodies and the State, but also between the religious bodies themselves. Nor is this aspect of the problem confined to inter-Church relations. It exists in other religious communities also, notably in our own country between the various sections of the Jewish community.

Similar problems are to be found in other spheres of life, and especially in political and racial relations. This again is to be seen both abroad and at home, in spite of the fact that we claim, not altogether without reason, to be a tolerant people. It is true, of course, that we have not gone to the extremes of Belsen, Dachau and Treblinka; of the forced labour camps of the Soviet Union; of the policies of apartheid and racial segregation of South Africa and the deep South of the United States. We have hardly had the occasion to do so, and one is tempted to feel that the tolerance we practise is mostly in relation to matters about which we know or care little. Whenever we feel strongly, whether in our religious, political or social life, we are as like as not to adopt intolerant attitudes, to say intolerant things, and even to behave intolerantly. We have had our racial riots at Notting Hill; we send our political or trade union non-conformists to the 'Coventry' of un-elected silence; and religious intolerance is still all too frequently evident among us.

Against this background the recent publication of an English translation of Joseph Lecler's study of *Toleration and the Reformation*¹ is an event of great interest and importance. The author is a member of the Society of Jesus, and, since 1939, a Professor of the Faculty of Theology in the Institut Catholique de Paris. For the past thirty years he has specialized in questions concerning the relationship of Church and State, the trend towards disestablishment, religious tolerance and freedom. Thirty pages of exceedingly valuable bibliography bear witness to the scope of this research, and nearly 900 pages of text (in two volumes) are remarkable for their insight and their objectivity.

Although his study is focused on the period of the Reformation, Professor Lecler is vitally concerned with problems of religious freedom and tolerance in the modern world; problems connected with the 'polemics about the conditions of Protestants in Spain and Colombia, the Swiss legislation against the Jesuits, the attacks of the journalist Paul Blanchard on American Catholics, the differences of opinion among Catholics themselves about religious freedom and the lay State'. There is also, as he rightly points out, 'an obvious relationship between the ecumenical concern, so common in our time, and the question of how to face the fact, at present insoluble, of denominational divisions'.

One cannot travel far in the study of any one of these issues, however, without finding oneself driven back upon history, of which, Professor Lecler declares—'many of our contemporaries suffer from an imperfect and fragmentary knowledge,' while, 'except in regard to certain famous personalities and spectacular

events, the documentation by theologians and even by historians is often confused, if not positively erroneous.' His own purpose, then, is neither to establish a particular thesis, nor to indulge in apologetics. It is simply to set out, as clearly and as authoritatively as a lifetime of study can enable him to do, facts and judgements which, though specially relevant to a particular period, are timeless in their implications.

He chose the period of the Reformation because, as he puts it, 'the break-up of medieval Christianity created, in a singularly acute way, the problem of religious pluralism within the State'. But if the problem became acute in the sixteenth century, it was by no means new. It is as old as the day when Abraham went out from Ur of the Chaldees looking for the 'city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God'. For, as Rabbi Dr Altmann pointed out in the Robert Waley Cohen Memorial Lecture (1957) on Tolerance and the Jewish Tradition, 'the problem of tolerance only arises where an individual has a vision of absolute truth, or where a religion is based on a revelation which fixes the centre of history in one single event'.

Professor Lecler begins, therefore, with a survey of what he calls the 'preliminary data' in the Scriptures, the Fathers, and the Middle Ages. His approach in this respect is, as far as he can make it so, that of the men of the Reformation themselves, who—

before arguing from theology or from reason sought the support of the *auctoritates*: in Old and New Testament, in the Fathers of the Church, and in a lesser degree the Medieval theologians.

He is concerned, in fact, less with the arguments likely to be adduced by the psychologist, or sociologist, or historical, or textual critic in our day, than with the way in which these sources were handled and interpreted by the leaders of the Reformation in their day.

In spite of the fact, as we shall see later, that there were signs of a growing awareness of the importance of toleration both in the Old and in the New Testaments, it is depressing to be reminded at how early a stage in the rise of the Christian Empire the transition from tolerance to intolerance began to appear.

Although, for example, the Edict of Constantine Augustus and Licinius Augustus in 313 granted freedom to Christians to practise the religion of their choice and gave a like freedom to all others to do likewise—

for, it is worthy of the time in which we live, and it befits the tranquillity which the Empire enjoys, that all our subjects should be completely free to have the deity of their choice, and that no cult be deprived of the honours that are due,

it was not long before fanaticism began to make itself felt. Thus, in 346, a recent convert to Christianity, Firmicus Maternus, bade the Emperor:

be not afraid to strip the temples of their ornaments. May these gods melt in the fire for the minting of your coins, and in the flames of your lead mines. Confiscate for your own benefit all their goods; make it all your own property. Since the ruin of the temples the divine power has caused your power to increase.

From the fire that was to transmute the ornaments of pagan temples into the currency of a Christian Emperor, it was a direct road to the flames that lit

the funeral pyres of the 'heretics' and martyrs of the Reformation. So serious were the problems posed by heresy, indeed, that even Servetus, in a letter to Calvin, by whose decision he paid for his own unorthodoxy with his life, admitted that serious heresy, coupled with obstinacy, deserved capital punishment. Writing of the death of Ananias and Saphira at the bidding of Peter, he suggests that in this way 'the Holy Spirit whom they had scorned made plain by that measure that they were incorrigible and obdurate in their wrong'. 'This crime', added Servetus, 'simply deserves death both before God and man.'

The dilemma is clear and timeless. Since belief, of whatever kind, is ultimately the source of action, the granting of freedom of belief, with its necessary corollary of freedom of expression, may well result in conduct inimical to any organized society, whether of Church or State. Recognition of this danger has led to the conclusion that the only possible alternatives are the complete 'toleration' which leads directly into the danger which it is desired above all else to avoid, or a form of 'toleration' closely akin to that shown by our Paris hôtelier towards dogs, which may in fact be little better than organized repression.

Perhaps, however, there is a 'more excellent way'. To this possibility the beginnings of an answer are to be found in St Thomas of Aquinas, who said of the exterior rites of paganism:

those rites (as opposed to those of the Jews) contain neither truth nor usefulness. There is therefore no reason to tolerate them unless it be to avoid an evil.

This, at least, admits the possibility of conditional toleration. The evil to be avoided he interprets as 'shocking public feeling or any disturbance which would be caused by this interference'. Moreover—and this is really important—he goes on to admit the further possibility that 'intolerance would be an obstacle to the salvation of those non-believers where a tolerant practice would, on the contrary, attract them to the Faith'. Thus the principle of the toleration of error, either to avoid a greater evil or in the hope of achieving a greater good, first found clear expression in relation to paganism.

There is not time here to trace the development of this doctrine. It was not until the sixteenth century, however, that some at least of the thinkers on both sides of the great reformation struggle began to interpret it in relation, not to pagans only, but also to heretics. More recently it has found fresh expression in two papal pronouncements and, paradoxically and by implication only, in a decree on 'mistakes in the conduct of scientific atheist propaganda among the population' issued by Mr Khrushchev in the name of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1954.

Contemporary Papal use of the principle is reflected by Leo XIII in his encyclical *Immortale Dei* in relation to the freedom of worship, and by Pius XII in connexion with the suppression of error. The second is perhaps more relevant to our immediate purpose.

In his Allocution to the National Convention of Italian Jurists in December 1953, Pope Pius XII said—

'It is plainly true that error and sin abound in the world today. God reprobates them but he allows them to exist. Wherefore the statement that religious and moral error

must always be impeded, when it is possible, because toleration of them is in itself immoral, is not valid absolutely and unconditionally. Moreover, God has not given even to human authority such an absolute and universal command in matters of faith and morality. . . . The duty of repressing moral and spiritual error cannot, therefore, be an ultimate norm of action. It must be subordinate to higher and more general guiding principles, which, in some circumstances allow, and even perhaps seem to indicate, as the better policy the toleration of error in order to promote a greater good'.

The importance of this statement, not only for the 'faithful' to whom it was addressed, but also to those whom the Popes would regard as 'separated Christians', is immediately apparent. It raises a number of points which call for further elucidation. Although, for example, Pius XII recognizes that 'it cannot serve as an ultimate norm of conduct', he appears not to question 'the duty of repressing moral and spiritual error'. Furthermore, the statement gives no indication of who is to determine what is the greater good, nor by what criteria such judgement is to be reached. More important than either of these considerations, however, is the citing of the divine example. God does not approve of error and sin, but He allows them to exist. The implications of this statement are tremendously exciting. They take us at once back into the heart of the New Testament itself, where, as Professor Lecler reminds his readers, Christians are taught that—

to imitate Christ, they must put into practice this love and charity whose source is God Himself, and which must be spread over the world: 'Love one another as I have loved you' (John 15₁₃). This mutual charity is even the mark by which Christ's true disciples will be known: 'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13₃₅). This charity must extend to enemies and imitate the Father's *patience and tolerance*'.

The italics here are mine. This linking of tolerance and love brings us, I believe, to the heart of the matter. For tolerance, and its implementation in a policy of toleration, is essentially a costly thing. That is implicit in the meaning of the word itself. It became explicit in terms of the divine tolerance of human error and sin in Christ's acceptance of its consequences in His Passion and death on the Cross. For such tolerance the only sufficient sanction is that of love, the love embodied in the whole creative process, the 'more excellent way' of St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, the love that in the Johannine epistles is God Himself. It was precisely for the sake of this 'greater good', or to quote the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'for the joy that was set before Him', that Christ 'endured the Cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God'.

The importance of this insistence upon love, indeed of this demonstration of love, as the only sufficient ground for creative toleration, becomes immediately apparent in the light of a very differently motivated attempt at present being made to apply the principle of toleration to the religious bodies in the Soviet Union. Mr Khrushchev's decree of November 1954 already mentioned above (the first official decree on religious affairs to be published in the Soviet Union since 1923) made it perfectly clear that it remained the essential policy of the régime 'to free the working masses from religious prejudices and superstition'.

'Religion', the decree states, 'obscures man's consciousness, it dooms man to a passive attitude towards the forces of nature and shackles his creative activity and initiative'. Religion, therefore, must go. At the same time the decree insists that neither persecution, mockery, nor even indifference, are likely to achieve this end. Experience has shown that—

any sort of administrative measures and offensive attacks against believers can only bring harm and lead to the confirmation and even to the strengthening of religious prejudices among them.

For the leaders of the Communist party, therefore, the 'more excellent way' is to 'avoid causing any offence to the feelings of believers', to refrain from persecution whether in word or deed, and at the same time to offer every possible inducement in the way of more effective propaganda and various kinds of material benefit calculated to win over the religious from the assumed error of their ways to the 'greater good' of the benefits offered by the dialectical materialism of the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

The motivation here, however, is very far from that which is implicit in Pius XII's reference to the patience and tolerance of God Himself, and one is left always with the feeling that where expediency is a determining factor, as it so manifestly is in the Soviet Union, the tactic may change almost overnight.

There remains one further consideration. It is significant that this latest exposition of the principle of toleration for the sake of the greater good was made in an address to a conference of lawyers. In this we have a pertinent and a very necessary reminder of the fact that because 'we have this treasure in earthen vessels' it is essential that love should be safeguarded by law. For if it be true that law without love tends to become sterile and tyrannical, it is equally true that love without law tends to licence and eventual anarchy.

What we have in the Cross is, in fact, not the victory of love over law, but the perfect resolution of the creative tension between the two which is at the very heart of God Himself. The nearer we approach to the embodiment of that resolution in our own life, whether as individuals or as communities, the nearer we shall come to understanding what is involved, not merely in the theory, but also in the practice of toleration. For in the final analysis toleration consists, not so much in what we do to other people, but in what we allow them to do to us; it is concerned not so much with the attitude we adopt to them, whether it be of the 'couldn't care less' variety or the kind of polite but obvious disapproval which the 'tolerated' themselves so understandably resent, but with the extent to which we are prepared to endure their difference from us, believing that the price of their redemption from error, if error it be, is our readiness to endure its consequences in love.

¹ Joseph Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, tr. by T. L. Westow. Longmans, two vols. (5s. and 63s).

CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE (with special reference to missionary opportunity in 1858)

John Foster

SOME DATES stand out in history to mark a period. One happening of tremendous consequence changes conditions for a large section of humanity. So familiar, the dates come to mind uncalled:

1914, the First World War
1789, the French Revolution
1453, the Fall of Constantinople
1066 and all that, as every schoolboy knows, though
1096 is a bigger date for the whole of Christendom, the beginning of the Crusades
800, the coronation of Charlemagne
410, the Fall of Rome before the Goths.

So one might go on. These years cannot be missed.

There are others which contain no one big event, but a strange falling together of smaller happenings. About the same time, in many parts of the world, things happen which point in a new direction. These years need someone already interested in the subject to perceive the synchronization and to point out the significance. My own chief interest is the spread of the Christian Faith. The year in modern history when most happened in this regard (I meant to write on it to mark the centenary) was 1858. It has been called the *annus mirabilis* of missionary opportunity. For consider:

- (1) 1858 is the year of Livingstone's second tour, which does open up the dark continent of Africa.
- (2) 1858 is the year when Commodore Perry of the U.S. Navy forcibly brings to an end Japan's two centuries of isolation.
- (3) 1858 is the year of the Treaty of Tientsin, ending the second war between Britain and China. Commodore Perry was lucky. Japan recognized the inevitable, and her door opened to his tap. We British had to blast China's door in, leaving China wide open to the world.
- (4) 1858 is the year when Britain brought to an end indirect rule through the East India Company, and proclaimed the Empire of India. The proclamation has been called the *Magna Carta* of Indian liberties.

The opening of doors in four great countries, a large part of two continents, raises acutely a subject central to the whole conception of the Church and its mission in the world. Yet it is a subject not easy to define in a single title. In the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh, 1910, Commission VII dealt with 'Missions and Governments'. Each General Assembly of the Church of Scotland receives a report from the Committee on 'Church and Nation'.

Throughout Church history there runs the theme of Christianity and culture—in the early centuries *conflict*, a Christian minority in a non-Christian culture; from the fourth century onwards *contribution*, Christians the nucleus of a Christian culture. And in many parts of Asia and of Africa today both situations are repeated, conflict and contribution.

Missions and governments, Church and nation, Christianity and culture—the subject is not fully expressed by any of these phrases, nor even by the sum of them. Let us illustrate from a concrete situation.

You go to — as a missionary. You need a passport and a visa to get there. You must get, and must keep, some authority's permission if you are to stay. The whole thing depends upon national and international relationships. Whether you like it or not, here at the outset is the question of missions and governments. In that country, you begin your missionary work. You may say with St Paul, 'We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake' (2 Cor 4₅). The fact remains, everything has come to you, even Jesus, as to one belonging to a certain background of life and thought. North-European culture has been profoundly influenced by Christ for 1,300 years. Going to another land, you do not want to westernize, but you *do* want to produce a like profound influence on this society—or *do you*? Whether you think this is your business or not, 'Christianity and culture' is a subject you will have to live with. We left the geography blank, but wherever in the modern world you go, you will find new consciousness of local loyalties, emergent nationalism, demand for an end to colonialism, demand for self-government. Are you content to try to save the individual, or have you a proper concern with 'Church and nation'?

Perhaps the question was never so dramatically raised, dramatically answered too, as at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches, Amsterdam 1948. Karl Barth made this declamation:

We must free ourselves from all quantitative thinking, all statistics, all calculation of observable consequences, all efforts to achieve a Christian world order. . . .

We are not the ones to change an evil world into a good one. God has not resigned His lordship over it into our hands. The salvation of the world which has already been accomplished was not our work. And so will that which still remains, the revealing of the world's salvation in a new heaven and a new earth, will not be our work, but His. All that is required of us is that in the midst of the political and social disorder of the world we should be His witnesses, as disciples and servants of Jesus.

Reinhold Neibuhr was quickly on his feet to charge Barth with 'transcendental irresponsibility'.

Does this question really sound, not only in academic discussion between rival theologians, but through a whole century of missionary work in Africa, Japan, China, India? For answer, we return to the year 1858 and the opening doors, first of all in Africa.

It is appropriate so to begin, for Africa competes with India for pride of place in the modern missionary movement. The formation in Britain of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1887, was a Christian effort, just as the passing of the Abolition Bill twenty years later was a Christian achievement—and in all history one of the most notable. To one of the Society's

foremost leaders, Granville Sharp, belongs the honour of founding in 1791 the Sierra Leone Company, 'to colonize a small part of the coast of Africa' as a home for freed slaves and a centre of civilized living. The first chaplain to the colony, Melville Horne, an Anglican clergyman 'who has been in Wesley's connexion', went out in 1792, the year before Carey sailed for India. His small book, *Letters on Missions*, along with Carey's first reports, were together responsible for the tide of enthusiasm which in 1795 launched the London Missionary Society, and in the following year the Glasgow Missionary Society and the Edinburgh Missionary Society. In the General Assembly of that same year 1796 occurred the historic debate on foreign missions. It is worth a digression to remark upon it, not only because the debate has often been misrepresented and misquoted, but because it touches upon our subject, Christianity and culture.

As the result of overtures from two synods, a debate began as to whether the Church of Scotland should undertake support of foreign missions directly through its Church courts. It is to the honour of the Church of Scotland that it was the first non-Roman Communion ever to discuss such an idea,¹ and still more to its honour that the idea was rejected by the narrow margin of 12 votes. Indeed it was a delay rather than a rejection, for coupled with the resolution to reject the overtures was a resolve

that they will embrace with thankfulness any future opportunity of contributing by their exertions to the propagation of the Gospel of Christ which Divine Providence may hereafter open.

The account of the debate was written—large sections of it word for word—by Robert Heron, the elder from Galloway responsible for opening the debate. Of his booklet of seventy-four pages, it is said, only three copies are known to exist. We are fortunate to have one in the library of Trinity College, Glasgow, surely the most vivid picture of eighteenth-century Moderates and Evangelicals in debate.

Heron had begun with a long, rambling speech about the benefits of the Christian religion to both society and the individual. He was somewhere in the midst of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire when the Moderator interrupted to ask him to get to the point. So he hastily concluded, stressing the appropriateness of the two overtures at a time when missionary opportunities and missionary enthusiasm were both increasing, and moving the appointment of a committee. Dr John Erskine of Greyfriars, experienced in the ways of assemblies (he should have been, since he was seventy-five) seconded, without a speech. The assembly had been surfeited with advocacy. Then the Rev. Mr Hamilton of Gladsmuir rose. He had come with his speech in his pocket: 'When our contemplative gaze sweeps over the surface of the terraqueous globe. . . .' But we will leave the purple patches and select only from what he said about Christianity and culture:

To spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel among barbarous and heathen nations seems to me highly preposterous, in as far as it anticipates, nay as it even reverses the order of nature. Men must be polished and refined in their manners before they can be properly enlightened in religious truths. . . . The Apostle Paul preached, not to naked savages, but to the inhabitants of cultured cities. . . .

It was this statement which moved Dr Erskine to say in something more than a whisper, 'Rax me that Bible,' and to begin turning up St Paul's words about being 'debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish' (Rom. 1,14). But in his refutation of Hamilton, these are the words which most delight me:

I cannot pretend to a like eloquence with my young friend. In the Divinity Hall in my day we had no Professor of Rhetoric. But I have a little Church history, and a little common sense.

'A little common sense' may well suggest that most cultural influences, including religion, flow best downhill—that is, from people of a higher to those at a lower level of civilization. As for 'a little Church history', let us take the evidence of Latourette, who knows more of this aspect of it than anyone has ever known:

Christianity has displaced some polytheisms and animistic cults, but except in the Graeco-Roman world, it has seldom made marked gains from other 'high' religions. . . . The amazing geographic strides of Christianity in the past 150 years have been by migrations . . . or among 'primitive' folk in the Americas, the Pacific, Africa, and Asia. . . . Conversions in China and Japan have been largely from those whose confidence in the existing religions had already been shaken by the impact of western civilization. (*The Christian Outlook*, p.7.)

He marks the exception of the Graeco-Roman world. There lies a subject, and a great one, for separate study.

The nineteenth century was for Christian expansion 'the great century', as Latourette has called it, chiefly because western 'Christian' civilization was dominant and our ways were being accepted more and more as the way of the world and the hope of the future. That lasted on into the twentieth, but not so far as our present position in the twentieth century's second half.

After a digression perhaps worthy of Robert Heron himself, let us return to the year 1858, and first of all to Africa.

(1) AFRICA

The L.M.S. began work in South Africa, and its pioneer was Vanderkemp (in Africa, 1799–1811), a Dutch doctor who had completed his medical course in Edinburgh and been ordained a minister of the Church of Scotland. The other greatest names are those of Scots—Robert Moffat (1816–70), and David Livingstone (1841–73). It was, of course, Livingstone who was to open up Africa. In 1856, from Central Africa, he had pushed to the west coast and then back, following the Zambezi River to the east coast at Quilimane, the first recorded crossing of the continent. Then in 1857 he went on furlough to Britain to tell of what he had seen. In campaigning against the slave trade he advocated positive as well as negative means. Suppress the slave trade by all means—use British men-of-war to police the seas against slave-traders. But get in with legitimate trade. Open up Africa! It is in the colossal darkness that this evil thing is able to live on. Open up Africa! Then he was to go back, not in the employ of the L.M.S., but as a British consul this time, still concerned above all else to open up Africa to the Gospel. Hear the peroration to his lecture in the Cambridge Senate House, one of the most resounding speeches to a student

audience ever made. A measure of its influence is the foundation of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, one of the chief Anglo-Catholic missionary societies, as far removed as one could imagine from the L.M.S. and from David Livingstone, a Scottish Congregationalist. Such is the strange inter-relationship of our communions in the missionary task.

I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity. Do you continue the work I have begun. I leave it with you.

Undergraduates of 1960 might well call after him, 'Here! Wait a bit! Don't leave it with us so suddenly. Commerce and Christianity? Can you link together the expansion of the West and the triumph of Christ's kingdom? Is our western way of life going to bring only light to the Dark Continent? Is ours a Christian civilization, advance-guard of a world growing brighter and better? Commerce with us, and so Christianity for them—is that it?' But he has gone, without replying. There were no such doubts to torment the mid-nineteenth-century mind. They did believe in progress, in Christendom, in themselves as having a part in God's plan for a Christian progress. And if you pity them for their out-of-date theology, have the grace to acknowledge their achievements. They did open up the world for the Gospel and carry the Gospel through every opening. Livingstone's second tour, beginning in 1858, is the turning-point in the history of what till then had been rightly called the Dark Continent.

(2) JAPAN

Europe's first introduction to Japan was in the letters of Francis Xavier. He arrived to found the Jesuit Mission there in 1549. By 1600 his prophetic word about 'a finer harvest to be reaped than anywhere' was being abundantly fulfilled. A handful of missionaries could already claim no less than 300,000 souls, including among their converts some of the highest in the land. Why this immediate and spectacular success? Japan had long been open to cultural influences (the art of writing, Confucian ethics, Buddhist religion) from her greater neighbour to the west, China. Buddhism at this period was at its lowest ebb. Why not try this newcomer of a religion from farther west? A pro-Christian Shogun gave the chance. Shogun means General, all-powerful at this time, as the Mayor of the Palace used to be in Merovingian France. In 1614 a change of Shogun, growing fear of the imperial designs of Portugal and Spain, and a revival of Japanese national spirit caused a change of policy. Missionaries were deported and Japanese Christians ordered to recant. In a revolt which followed 37,000 Christians were killed in the fighting, and 6,000 more were martyred by beheading, burning, and crucifixion. From 1639, except for a minimum of Dutch trade through the one port of Nagasaki, Japan cut herself off from the western world.

Then in 1854 the American squadron came sailing in, and in 1858 the Treaty of Yedo (Tokyo) opened Japan's door. Ten years later came the Meiji Restoration, better called Japan's Renaissance. The Shogunate disappeared, but it did not give place (as the first name implies) to direct rule by the Meiji Emperor. Instead, power came into the hands of a new and capable bureaucracy intent upon reform. Forced into the modern world, Japan must win a foremost place in it. For a modern navy, they wisely took Britain as example. For an army

they looked first to France, till the disaster of Sedan in 1870 turned their gaze to Germany. For law they looked to Britain, for medicine to Germany, for a constitution to Germany again (and Bismarck-influenced), for a parliamentary system to our own 'Mother of Parliaments'. Many influences came from the United States. Some 75 per cent. of Protestant missionaries were American, among them the founders of Japan's first modern schools and colleges. Britain, however, comes into the picture in one more respect. Japan, with 30 million people in her island empire, looked at our larger population in islands smaller than her own, and saw that our Industrial Revolution solved the population problem. And so, besides 'strategic industries' (engineering, shipbuilding and mining) to support her modern armaments, the State encouraged, and early subsidized, capitalist development of cotton mills, silk filatures, and other light industries. The products of this sweated labour did something to solve Japan's problem, but soon raised economic problems for Japan's competitors.

It will be noted how much came *from us*, so much that a generation ago Sun Yat-sen, the Father of the Chinese Republic, wrote,

We in the east have a nation which may be called the Britain of the east. That nation is Japan.

I remembered it in the years of Japan's aggression against China, and I said, 'God forbid.' And then I wondered if I should have said, 'God forgive.' In copying from the West, Japan missed something, and whose was the fault?

Throughout history and all over the world, except in some few places in this present age, society has looked to religion to provide motive force, moral sanctions, and support for legitimate authority. The Japanese, in rebuilding their nation's life, had no thought of being exceptions in this regard. They were copying western ways, so what of western religion? In 1875 the Japanese Government adopted Sunday as a day of rest. In 1881 one leading Japanese advocated that they should profess Christianity as their official religion. Some missionaries thought this was coming, but I wonder if there was ever really much chance. Ten years before there were only ten Japanese Protestant Christians in the whole Empire! The decisive influence was clearly not in Japan, but in Christianity as represented in the nations of the West. The possibility soon passed. Christians were to remain a small minority—today, Roman Catholic and Protestant together, only 600,000 in a nation of 90 millions, the smallest proportion of Christians in any major country of the world.

The Japanese turned to their own Shinto, a religion of nature worship. They selected Amaterasu Omikami, the Goddess of the Sun, as the divine ancestor of their Imperial Family, and to this myth they joined as a religious concept their own high destiny as a nation of super-men. This so-called 'Shrine Shinto' they made their official religion. It may well remind us of Emperor worship at the time when the Revelation was written, and of what St Augustine says in *De Civitate Dei* of 'love of self being set up in the place of love of God'. It did provide the motive power for modern Japan, the fanatical fervour of the aggressive imperialism, which brought tragedy to so many peaceful lands of the Pacific and East-Asia, until to Japan herself it brought the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

There was a stone which the builders rejected. The Japanese had acted as

though the Christian religion were an optional extra, not basic to our culture, not the foundation of everything in it which is most truly admirable. How could they have been made to see? The Christian imprint was there in so many of our traditions and institutions—in law, education, medicine, and parliamentary democracy. But who would dare to claim that it was there in our industry, in our armaments, or in the way we used them? Who would dare to claim that the Christian religion's *fundamental* presence has ever been obvious enough?

The problem is with us still. The *Guardian* for 19th November 1960 carried an article by James Morris, 'The Two Faces of Japan', written on the eve of their parliamentary elections. He questioned the reality of Japan's supposed miraculous mass-conversion to democracy, especially with 'the nasty extremist movements of Right and Left which shamelessly advocate violence as a course of national policy', and he continued:

The Japanese have endured ghastly traumatic experience since the myth of their divine invincibility was shattered fifteen years ago.

He ended,

It is a wretched, crude, vulgar, sordid version of western culture that has marched upon Japan in the wake of the conquering armies.

Here is the same subject, Christianity and culture. And if 100 years on from 1858 we criticize Livingstone for too easily connecting them ('Christianity and commerce'), do we or do we not bewail the fact that the Japanese failed, and fail, to see the link? Where lies the greater misunderstanding of western history, of Christian history, of the Church, and of the purposes of God?

(3) CHINA

The new routes about the world brought the Portuguese, first Europeans for almost two centuries, to the south China coast in the year 1517—perhaps as notable an event as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. The Chinese were not impressed by the rough ways of these western adventurers ('ocean devils' they called them), closed their ports against them, and limited foreign trade to one small area off the Canton Delta. By the opening of the nineteenth century this area had become the Portuguese-governed colony of Macao, foreign merchants being also allowed by the Chinese to transfer themselves (but not their households) to a small area of the river bank outside the one city of Canton for the few months of the trading season. It was these vexatious limitations, China's refusal to treat with us as equals—indeed, refusal to treat with us (except indirectly through the Chinese merchants) at all—which caused the two wars between Britain and China in 1840–2 and 1856–8. They are commonly called the Opium Wars, and to our shame it must be admitted that opium, grown in British India, was the chief commodity of British trade. The two treaties of 1842 and 1858 did open the door. The first ceded to Britain the island of Hong Kong, and opened Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai, where foreign communities could live with extra-territorial rights—that is, under their own laws, administered by their own consuls. The second opened more such 'treaty ports', as far north as Manchuria and up the River Yang-tze to Hankow in the heart of China. It also made foreigners free to

travel anywhere. And toleration of the Christian religion was promised. The French were our allies in this second war, and the Chinese version of their treaty (not the French original) included the granting to missionaries of the right 'to rent and buy land and to erect buildings' anywhere in China. The missionary interpreter seems to have added this extra on his own. So it is sometimes said that mission property outside 'the treaty ports' rests upon a forgery. This is not true. The clause allowing foreigners to travel anywhere was itself enough. The traveller was offered property, often property difficult to sell locally. Once bought, it was registered at the consulate, and, wherever it was, it came under consular jurisdiction by the foreigner's rights of extra-territoriality. Before 1842 there were two or three Protestant missionaries with an insecure footing in Macao and Canton, after 1842 missionaries in five 'treaty ports', after 1858 missionaries anywhere; that is a measure of the change.

From 1858 I want now to pass to 1922, when I went to China and the results of all this struck me. That very year there began, as part of the nationalism which clamoured for 'abrogation of the unequal treaties', the Anti-Christian Movement. You will see the connexion from this declaration of the year 1924:

Christianity is the vanguard of imperialism and a means of exploitation. Britain, France, and Germany compelled China to cede territory in compensation for the murder of missionaries. Eight nations together forced China to pay the huge Boxer indemnity, owing to trouble caused by Christianity.

Another declaration goes on to say that missionaries, allowed by the unequal treaties to live in the interior, have extended the sphere of consular jurisdiction and further diminished China's sovereignty. Where the missionary goes, merchant, mill-owner, and miner will follow. It continues, convincingly enough:

If it were not so, why should Japan include among her Twenty-one Demands (1915) 'that Japanese subjects shall have the right of missionary propaganda in Buddhist China'?

Already, because of the growing importance of the Nationalists' alliance with Russia, this propaganda often linked capitalism with imperialism. Now, a generation later, Communist-China attacks our record as missionaries. Perhaps it did not need much indoctrination to induce Chinese Christians, our former colleagues, to raise their voices too against us because of our associations with all that the Great Powers did to China in and after the year 1858.

Some of my missionary colleagues of the 1920's, still more of the disillusioned who express judgement upon the debacle of China missions now, seem to take these accusations at their face value. 'We suffer,' they say, 'for the mistakes of our predecessors in 1858. They should not have entered through a door opened by force of arms, least of all through a door opened by the Opium Wars. Their presence should not have depended upon treaty rights wrung from a defeated China. Extraterritoriality and consular jurisdiction? Messengers of the Prince of Peace should have waited until they could come in humbly on China's own terms.'

For my part, I wonder how much right we have to make judgements upon a nineteenth-century situation from a twentieth-century point of view. Theirs

was a different day with a different opportunity, and they took it—even as St Paul took his, using Roman citizenship and all. Even in the 1920's I found I had to ask myself, 'Since when have Christians waited for ideal conditions?' When the Lord said, 'Go ye into all the world . . .' it was not an ideal world. When 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son', it was for the world's sin. If, when soldier, sailor, merchant, consul were pressing upon China, the missionary had stood back, he would have withdrawn from an evil situation the chief factor able to work towards its redemption. Those who belong to a religion of Incarnation must not wait; they must *work*, for a better day.

(4) INDIA

As 'Christian' rulers of Hindustan, the record of the East India Company might be expected to be a mixed one. Their relationship with the Germans of the Tranquebar Mission (1706 on), especially Schwartz (1750–98), had been admirable. Some of the E.I.C.'s chaplains—Martyn, Brown, Buchanan—were the real pioneers of Anglican missions. Its Fort William College for young men coming out to the Civil Service provided Carey with an abundant where-withal for his life and work, once he had got the language and become their Professor of Bengali. Some of its laymen (e.g. Charles Grant, friend of Wilberforce and of all good works, and Donald Macleod, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, who himself translated the Psalms into Hindustani) were outstanding in their Christian witness. The prevailing official attitude, however, was that the Government of India should be guardian of the culture of India and restrain zealots of other religions who came there to disturb. Thus B.M.S. entered, not through British India, but Danish Serampore, and L.M.S. through Dutch Chinsurah. The first American missionaries were excluded from Bengal in 1812. The Government's nervousness was illustrated in 1819, when a sepoy of the Bengal Army was baptized by one of its chaplains. The C.O. reported to the G.O.C. 'this singular and unprecedented happening', being careful to add that his permission had not been obtained. Mayhew (*Christianity and the Government of India*, p. 158) mischievously remarks, 'presumably by the chaplain, not by the Holy Ghost'. The sepoy was suspended and later retired on full pay—surely an encouragement rather than a deterrent to conversions! The E.I.C., on the other hand, managed pilgrimage centres (with a profitable pilgrim tax), repaired and rebuilt temples, and provided military honours at festivals of the gods. This patronage of heathenism was vehemently attacked by 'Exeter Hall spouters', as Macaulay calls them. A more striking protest came when a private soldier detailed as member of a ceremonial guard at a temple festival, refused duty. He was court-martialled. The Commander-in-Chief of Madras, Sir Peregrine Maitland, refused to confirm the sentence and resigned. Nelson, a judge, resigned over the same issue.

Then came the Mutiny of 1857. How like Britain! We ruled India for 100 years and nearly lost our Empire there before we acknowledged its existence. There followed in 1858 the Queen's proclamation of her Indian Empire.

Have women a special gift for going to the heart of a problem? One of the problems of the Reformation was how to restate belief about the Lord's Supper. Medieval theologians had left a legacy of argument, Realists and Nominalists,

separating substance from accidents, and working out a theory of transubstantiation. And now Protestant theologians were rejecting transubstantiation, or changing 'trans' to 'con' (and wondering what difference it made), arguing with each other, as Luther argued with Zwingli, chalking on the table between them, '*Hoc est corpus meum*'. No demythologizing in Marburg then! Queen Elizabeth composed a little verse on the words of institution:

*'Twas God the Word who spake it.
He took the bread and brake it.
And what His word doth make it,
That I believe, and take it.*

A practical solution!

Queen Victoria was less gifted, and religiously was a much more simple soul. But again we find a woman's practical solution. How could she be a Christian sovereign of a non-Christian country? They brought her a document to sign:

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects. We disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. . . . None will be favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances.

I am told that after the words 'the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects', with her own hand she added words which make all the difference:

And those obligations by the blessing of almighty God we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions. . . .

A positive testimony of personal faith was incorporated in this Magna Carta of India's liberties. Perhaps it is here that we come nearest to those words of Barth,

... All that is required of us is . . . that we should be His witnesses, as disciples and servants of Jesus.

Chiefly in the light of events of one tremendous year, 1858, we have been asking what Christianity has to do with influencing a culture, what rightful interest in becoming the inspiration of a way of life. We saw with regard to Africa Livingstone's too easy association of Christianity and culture ('Christianity and commerce' being his phrase), a too easy assumption that our way was Christian-inspired, its coming to Africa destined to bring light to the Dark Continent.

In Japan we saw an unfortunate dissociation—our way of life, yes, but no place for that religion which is fundamental, not indeed to all that Japan admired, but to all in western life most truly admirable. In China we saw an inevitable association between western nations (especially Britain) and the Christian religion, with disastrous results for the religion. The Opium Wars broke down China's door, and, entering thus, the Christian cause bore something of the stains. In India we saw the long lack of association between Government and

Christianity, attempts at religious neutrality resulting in pro-pagan prejudice, then at last solution in the Queen's expression of personal religious faith, but public impartiality, and Government thereafter following this lead.

I fear I have merely raised one question in different settings with only occasional suggestions of my own answer, or, more often, my impatience with other people's answer. *Is it a part of our commission to 'change an evil world into a good one'?*

Preparing a sermon on Christians as a leaven in society, I turned up a commentary on Mt 13₃₃, and read;

We must not identify the three measures of meal with the world. It is entirely contrary to the whole teaching of our Lord and the New Testament to suppose that the Church will ever transform the world.

Yet (I found myself protesting) our Lord did say, 'Ye are the light of the world,' 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' And what did He mean but that light scatters darkness and that salt preserves? The commentary continues:

The Kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of God and Christ not by conversion but by judgement. When the Church endeavours to embrace the world it becomes deeply corrupted.

So New Testament commentators too feel that they must expound this subject of Christianity and culture, and in these days of obsession with the eschatological, they turn away from the idea of a Christian society, a Christian nation, a Christian world, as untrue to the Gospel. If this seems modern, in contrast with outmoded Victorianism, let me quote a similar point of view expressed by Julian the Apostate 1,600 years ago this year. Speaking of the Imperial State Church, he says:

Jesus and Paul never taught you this. They never expected that Christians would fill so important a place, and were satisfied with converting a few servant-girls and slaves, and by their means getting hold of their mistresses (*Against the Galileans*).

A ministers' fraternal was discussing two views of the Church: the sect ideal as represented by the sixteenth-century phrase, 'the worthiest, be they never so few', and the parish church (to borrow words from seventeenth-century Hooker) 'in some things blemished with the stain of human frailty'. One minister spoke the last word in the discussion: 'The former is the Church as we see it in the New Testament.' But is that the last word? Can we stop at the New Testament when our Lord foretold 'greater works than these', and the Holy Spirit's guidance 'into all the truth'? Perhaps in thinking what the Church should be, you will be ready to include the heroic centuries of persecution. But *is not Christendom too part of our inheritance?* Or do you believe that the Church should have stayed in the catacombs and never come out into the Empire? There is no virtue in belonging to a minority. The virtue lies in being able, in a minority, not to lose heart, but to go on as though the truth that now holds you will one day win the world.

¹ Methodists had already arrived at that position. Missionary work among Negro slaves in the West Indies begun in 1760, was in 1786 accepted as the responsibility of Conference. Without waiting to discuss the principle, Methodists as so often, had acted.

LUTHER'S APPROACH TO WORSHIP

A. Skevington Wood

ACCORDING TO Emil Brunner, the question of the Church is the unsolved problem of Protestant theology.¹ But involved in, and to a certain degree dependent upon the doctrine of the Church, is the equally controversial matter of Christian worship. These two are inextricably implicated in each other, so that either the perfections or the inadequacies characterizing our conception of the one will in turn embellish or distort our expression of the other. 'The Church is at its best when it is at worship', declared Dr Wynne C. Boliek some time ago: but the converse may prove to be a pathetic possibility.

At least we are aware of this linkage today, and within the bounds of Protestantism, as well as in Catholic circles (whether Roman, Eastern, or Anglican), we are witnessing at once a renewed concern with the doctrine of the Church and a revived interest in liturgy. It is obviously preferable that these should proceed hand in hand, but for the purposes of this present survey we shall have to treat them separately and focus our attention upon the latter. We are realizing in our generation that, as Georges Florovsky has expressed it, 'Christianity is a liturgical religion'.² Its dogmatical formulations are safeguarded and ventilated in corporate worship. So Peter Brunner can assert that 'liturgy is dogma prayed and confessed'.³ Consequently, a desire for liturgical reform has voiced itself in a series of commissions, and worship has figured as a central topic of ecumenical discussion.

There is a growing consciousness that Protestantism has been guilty of a certain neglect in this direction and that attendance at worship has suffered correspondingly. Some words of Robert Stephenson Simpson, uttered in the course of his Chalmers Lecture at Edinburgh in 1922, are perhaps even more relevant now than they were then:

I am convinced that we shall not recover the habit of churchgoing in our land, unless in our Reformed Protestant worship we lay more emphasis upon the fact that something is *done* in public worship. In the worship of the Church of Rome, which centres in the Mass, it is openly proclaimed that something happens. The tendency at times in Protestant worship is to suggest that the value of worship lies in its effect upon the worshipper. That is not so [Dr Simpson hastened to add]. The central thing in worship is objective, not subjective. In worship we do not only receive, but primarily we give.⁴

Now, if we are to correct the deviations of contemporary Protestantism by reference to the standards of the Reformation, we can do no better than return to the pioneer reformer, Martin Luther himself. We shall discover in him not only the historic rootage of Protestant liturgics, but also the continuing link between Protestantism and the Catholic tradition. In our eagerness to hail

Luther as the champion of the evangelical faith we must not forget that he by no means intended to sever himself entirely from the past. He was a reformer, not a revolutionary and certainly not an anarchist.

When Luther's Christian conscience forced him to take a definite stand against the obvious errors of the Church of his time [writes Harjumpää], it ought to be clear beyond all doubt that, however strong and rough the language he used in his attacks, his purpose was not to build a new Church, but to restore the existing Church to the full purity of faith. He was therefore anxious to preserve all those traditions and customs which were agreeable to the spirit, if not exactly to the letter of the Gospel. Thus, the Lutheran Reformation was intended to have the character of a restoration, rather than of a religious and ecclesiastical revolution.⁵

To what extent this objective was achieved is, of course, another matter. But conspicuously in the realm of liturgical reorientation it was the conservative policy which largely prevailed. Hence we find Luther beginning his letter, *Concerning the Ordering of Divine Worship in the Congregation* (1523), with this statement as a point of departure:

The liturgy now in common use everywhere, like the preaching office, has a high, Christian origin. But just as the preaching office has been debased and impaired by spiritual tyrants, so also the liturgy has been corrupted by the hypocrites. Now as we do not abolish the preaching office on this account but desire to restore it again to its right and proper place, so it is not our intention to discontinue the liturgy but to restore it again to proper and correct usage.⁶

'Like any good gardener,' says Vilmos Vajta, 'Luther was determined to destroy the weeds in order to save the real plants from being hidden and ultimately choked completely.'⁷

To understand the comparative conservatism of Luther's liturgical reform we must recognize his intermediate position between the papists on the one hand and the sectaries on the other. Throughout the bulk of his career Luther was waging war on two fronts. He feared the *Schwärmern*, or Enthusiasts, as much as the Romanists. To him, both were enemies of true Christian liberty. Both aimed at the replacement of faith by human rites: the one by the imposition of certain legal sanctions, the other by the imposition of certain devotional obligations. Luther attempted to liberate the worship of the Church from both negative and positive hindrances. In perhaps rather surprisingly Anglican fashion in this instance, he sought to tread the *via media*. He actually employed that now classic formula. He strove to steer a middle course between the Scylla of fanatical libertinism and the Charybdis of Roman rigorism. It is in the light of this perpetual dilemma that we must view Luther's liturgical policy. 'We are neither papists nor followers of Carlstadt', he declares, 'but free and Christians.'⁸

But our primary preoccupation in this article is not with the mechanics of liturgy, so to speak. We shall endeavour to penetrate beneath the surface of liturgical rearrangement and inquire into the underlying theology which determined Luther's approach to worship. This is a task which has been largely overlooked by the older literature on Luther's liturgics. Recent research, however, has been concerned to trace the doctrinal parentage of his reforms in worship, and in what follows we shall be drawing upon the fruits of such scholarship.⁹

Luther's revised conception of worship stems from that basic theological reorientation which Boehmer and Nygren have aptly called a Copernican revolution.¹⁰ It represents a transference of the centre of gravity from subject to object—the reverse of Kant's epistemological procedure. 'Luther insists', explains Nygren, 'in opposition to all egocentric forms of religion, upon a purely theocentric relation to God.'¹¹ Hence the doctrine of justification by faith is regarded as the article of a standing or falling Church and the *regula regulans* of all theology. This is not simply one doctrine amongst others; it is not even the supreme doctrine above all others; it is the *Grundmotif* of all theology. Hence it constitutes the yardstick by which every teaching is to be tested, and not only every teaching, but every practice within the Church.

It was with this over-all criterion of justification by faith that Luther addressed himself to the question of worship. The apparent ambiguity of some of his decisions is explicable in these terms. 'He accepted or rejected liturgical forms', as Vajta points out, 'according to their theological meaning'.¹² This helps us to understand why, for instance, Luther did not even repudiate the elevation of the host at the climax of the Mass. Such an act obviously opened the door to all sorts of abuses and superstitions, and Luther employs no ambiguous language to denounce the essential idolatry of such misconceptions. Nevertheless, he does not condemn the elevation out of hand nor reject it completely. He recognized that, properly interpreted, it emphasized the givenness of the Sacrament, and as such was in harmony with his fundamental theological convictions.

When he elevates the host he [i.e. the priest] addresses not God, but us, as though to say to us: 'See, this is the seal and sign of the testament wherein Christ has bequeathed to us remission of sins and eternal life.' This agrees with the chant of the choir: 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' Hereby we testify that in the Mass we receive benefits from God, not offer or give anything to Him.¹³

It is in this integration of Catholic substance and Protestant principle that Paul Tillich sees the genius of Luther's reforming work.

Having related Luther's liturgical position to his determinative theological principle, we may briefly examine his conception of worship from the twin angles of grace and faith, of gift and acceptance, of offering and receiving. Needless to say, Luther finds all he has to say on the Biblical revelation: for, he affirms, 'there is no other evidence of Christian truth on earth but the Holy Scriptures'.¹⁴

I. WORSHIP AS THE WORK OF GOD IN HIMSELF: GRACE

This we may describe as the downward aspect of worship. It stresses God's offer. But that, of course, is not to suggest that any part of worship is otherwise than the work of God. If we accept Evelyn Underhill's definition of worship as 'the response of the creature to the Eternal',¹⁵ we must assume that such a response is itself originally stimulated by the operation of divine grace.

With that important proviso in mind, we can conveniently consider Luther's approach to worship first as the work of God in Himself, or a manifestation of grace. Grace is one of the great words of the Gospel which Luther rediscovered and re-established. He rejected the Scholastic theory of grace as a quality of

the soul or as an infusion of depersonalized virtue. He saw that grace is the divine love in action, moving out in sheer undeserved goodness to bestow pardon, blessing and power upon unworthy man. It is, indeed, the favour of God. Luther's doctrine of grace was corroborated in his own religious experience. His discovery of a gracious God is, as Professor Philip S. Watson shows, the clue to his entire theological scheme.¹⁶

All this is determinative in relation to Luther's approach to worship. He distinguished sharply between idolatry, in which man creates God in his own image, and theolatry, in which God Himself assumes the initiative throughout. Worship is essentially an act of God in which He condescends to visit man in Word and Sacrament. There is a sense in which God is concealed; it is His glory to hide Himself. But in the Word He has revealed Himself. In Christ He is no longer *Deus absconditus*: He is *Deus Revelatus*. And such is the God who meets believers in worship.¹⁷ Here is why the Word is central to worship. Neglect of this consideration Luther regarded as the most serious defect of medieval liturgy. 'The important thing is this, that everything be done so that the Word prevails and does not once more become a clamour or whine, or rattled off mechanically as it has been heretofore. It is better to abandon everything else except the Word.'¹⁸

This link between Luther's doctrine of the Word and the nature of Christian worship supplies a vital clue. Translated into current theologicophilosophical language, it means that worship is an occasion of existential encounter. The initiative lies with God, who breaks into the space-time continuum in order to confront man with Himself. This vertical invasion represents the essential core of worship. The God who came to earth in the person of His only Son still comes to us in Christ's Body the Church. All authentically Christian worship is incarnational. It prolongs the gracious effects of our Lord's coming in the flesh into the living present. 'The Word transforms the "then" into a "now"', says Vajta. 'It renders the past relevant to the present. It makes Christ the contemporary of every generation.'¹⁹ That is why every historical liturgy includes some rehearsal of God's mighty saving acts in Christ. This is an element of worship which runs right back to the primitive Church and, as Archbishop Brilioth has shown, constituted the fundamental difference between the heathen mysteries and the Christian Eucharist.²⁰ According to Karl Heim, Christianity is based on 'the majesty of what happened', and in its worship the Church takes care to recall these vital items of salvation-history. The preservation of this aspect of liturgy is one of Luther's major contributions to the Protestant tradition of worship.

II. WORSHIP AS THE WORK OF GOD IN MAN: FAITH

This is the upward aspect of worship. We have noted the existential nature of the Christian *leitourgia*. God meets man and challenges him to choose. Worship compels a man to say Yes or No to God, to contract in or to contract out, to co-operate or to remain indifferent, to respond or resist. In this context must be placed Bishop Stählin's phrase *Liturgie als Entscheidung* (liturgy as decision).

Worship is the living form of faith. On its manward side it represents the believing reception of outpoured grace. It is more than mere response. That would imply a certain liberty on man's part, as though he were independent of

God and could decide at leisure whether he desired to acknowledge God's overture. And faith is more than a status to assume and a character to claim. As such it might become a human accomplishment to be presented to God. Luther only refers to faith in this manner when he is dealing with a false, perverted faith. Faith is simply an open hand, daily accepting the grace of God in Word and Sacrament. It is the believer's appropriation of God's provision.

Luther insists that faith is infinitely more than the spiritualization of worship. It cannot be confined to the inner life of the Christian, for it depends upon the outward means of grace. Once again, Luther strikes the happy scriptural medium between Rome and Zwickau. The papists tended to overestimate the external means; the enthusiasts tended to overestimate the inward experience. Luther recognized both as necessary elements of faith. It is only through faith that worship as the work of God in Himself becomes also the work of God in man, and so a fulfilment of the first commandment. And yet such faith is itself a gift from God.²¹

This being so, it is difficult to appreciate the ground upon which Luther is still regarded as the champion of unmitigated subjectivism. Evelyn Underhill fell prey to this misconception in her classic study of worship, and Rupert Davies has concluded that Luther's convictions rest ultimately upon his own religious experience and 'instead of an objective religion we find a blank subjectivism, heavily, but not impenetrably, disguised'.²² In his discussion, *Concerning Two Sorts of Men in Respect of Faith, and What True Faith Is*, Luther makes the distinction sufficiently plain. One is faith pure and simple, founded on God alone, whereas the other is based upon what man himself perceives and experiences of the divine beneficence. The line of demarcation between objective and subjective faith could hardly be indicated more clearly, nor does Luther leave us in any sort of doubt as to which he deems to be true Christian faith. 'Faith', he affirms, 'rests in those things which cannot be beheld or laid hold of by any sense of the body or soul, stands in that persuasion which it has conceived concerning God, and commits itself wholly to it.'²³

Luther speaks about two aspects of faith with reference to worship: *fides ex auditu* (faith by hearing) and *usus sacramenti* (the use of the sacrament). It is interesting that in his German Bible he translated Romans 10₁₇ as *So kommt der Glaube aus der Predigt* (Thus faith comes by preaching), so closely did he identify the proclamation of the Word and its reception by the hearer. The use of the sacrament rests not on personal worthiness, but on the work of God. Faith is built on the fact that God in Christ is present to impart eternal life. To those who shrink from communion, he would urge that faith is the only worthiness and unbelief the only unworthiness.²⁴

We have only been able to take a passing glance at a vast subject which invites further research. But at least it will have been made clear that Luther's liturgical revisions sprang from and were motivated by his central theological insights. And it will have become equally apparent that his approach to worship is deeply significant for the problems which confront us today in this same sphere. His middle way, not of spineless compromise, but of true Christian freedom, avoiding the extremes of Romanist ritualism and Protestant revivalism, offers a suitable springboard for future ecumenical conversation.

- ¹ E. Brunner, *The Divine Imperative*, p.523.
- ² *Ways of Worship. The Report of a Theological Commission of Faith and Order*, ed. P. Edwall, E. Hayman and W. D. Maxwell, p.53.
- ³ P. Brunner, *Der Gottesdienst an Sonn- und Feiertagen*, p.10.
- ⁴ R. S. Simpson, *Ideas in Corporate Worship*, p.23.
- ⁵ T. Harjumäki, 'Luther and Public Worship', in *Luther Speaks: Essays by Lutheran Pastors*, ed. H. P. Ehrenberg, p.47.
- ⁶ M. Luther, *Werke*, Weimarer Ausgabe (W. A.), 12.35; cf. 206.
- ⁷ V. Vajta, *Luther on Worship: An Interpretation*, p.32.
- ⁸ W.A., 18.122.
- ⁹ Notably the writings of A. Allwohn, O. Dietz, J. Pelikan and V. Vajta.
- ¹⁰ H. Boehmer, *Luther and the Reformation in the Light of Modern Research*, p.80; A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros. The History of the Christian Idea of Love*, Part II, Vol. II, pp.463ff.
- ¹¹ Nygren, op. cit., p.463.
- ¹² Vajta, op. cit., p.44.
- ¹³ W. A., 6.359; cf. 12.212-13, 18.99-100.
- ¹⁴ W.A., 10.628.
- ¹⁵ E. Underhill, *Worship*, p.3.
- ¹⁶ P. S. Watson, *Let God be God. An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther*, pp.20-2.
- ¹⁷ W.A., 42.634.
- ¹⁸ W.A., 12.37.
- ¹⁹ Vajta, op. cit., p.70.
- ²⁰ Y. Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice*, p.34.
- ²¹ Cf. Vajta, op. cit., pp.145-6.
- ²² R. E. Davies, *The Problem of Authority in the Continental Reformers*, p.27.
- ²³ W.A., 11.15.
- ²⁴ W.A., 2.694, 30.230.

THE NEW AND THE OLD

A. Gordon James

NOW THAT THE new translation of the New Testament has been successfully launched, the publication of an edition of the Old Testament in contemporary English will be awaited with interest. It is doubtful whether it will be received with similar acclamation, for two main reasons. First, for many people the Old Testament has been superseded by the New, and its necessity as a vital part of divine revelation is less apparent. Secondly, its meaning and purpose are obscured by those, and there are still very many of them, who regard the Old Testament as an isolated and complete book, rather than a library of different books of varying spiritual value. For them, a translation based, as it is bound to be, upon the known results of biblical criticism, will be regarded as tampering with the Word of God.

It would seem, therefore, that what is required is something more than a

rendering of the Hebrew text into the vernacular; if the Old Testament is to be understood by those who will take the trouble to read it, there must also be a translation of the ideas of the writers into the modern idiom. Unless this is done, and it is a formidable task indeed, it is unlikely that it will be treated seriously by any who are not convinced Christians; and even these, unless they are instructed, may easily mistake its meaning. It becomes a question of interpretation as well as of translation.

Before going further into the subject, it may be well to consider the different ways in which the Old Testament as we know it is at present understood. They fall roughly into four groups:

1. *Literary.* There can be no doubt that in general the books of the Old Testament have a high literary value, especially in the sonorous language of the Authorized Version. A saying, rightly or wrongly attributed to Quiller-Couch, is relevant here: 'I do not know whether the Bible is inspired or not; but the language certainly is.' Such inspiration, however, is regarded as natural rather than supernatural. It shines in the works of the great poets. Those who approach the Old Testament in this way hold that though the subject matter is religious, its true value consists more in its form than in its content. It is, of course, true that it invites comparison with the literature of nations other than the Hebrew, and indeed draws from a vast reservoir of ancient lore from which it derives much of its history and experience. The Genesis stories of creation have a certain affinity with the myths of other faiths. The laws of Moses have much in common with the Code of Hammurabi. The study of comparative religion reveals the influence upon Hebrew thought of ideas found in the sacred literature of ancient peoples. All this is of the greatest possible interest and throws a flood of light upon the Old Testament as a whole, and it will be generally conceded that it enhances its value. If we stop at this point, however, as some do, we are in danger of obscuring what for the Christian is paramount—namely, the place of the Old Testament in the flowing stream of divine revelation, culminating in the Incarnation.

2. *Literal.* For this approach the Fundamentalists are largely responsible. The Bible is considered as a unity, which in a very special sense it is, for it deals throughout with the mighty acts of the living God. But when this is pushed to the extent of considering all its parts as of equal spiritual value, it becomes a dangerous heresy. To give to an isolated text from the Old Testament the same authority as an extract from St John's Gospel is not only to override one's critical judgement, but to misread Scripture. Whatever else is true of the Bible, it is certainly not on one level. The literalist is bound to be in constant trouble. He has a standing quarrel with the scientist, who cannot accept, for example, the notion that the world was created in seven days, each of twenty-four hours' duration. He is at odds with the historian, who distinguishes between factual events and the legends which have grown out of those events. He takes issue with the theologian, who cannot believe that God directed Samuel to hack Agag to pieces before the Lord. It is surprising how many good religious people take refuge in the fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture, despite its affront to logic and common sense.

3. *Allegorical.* This is an easy way out of many difficulties, and was favoured by certain of the early Fathers. When one meets with a passage of Scripture

the meaning of which is not immediately apparent, a quick way of escape is to describe it as an allegorical representation of a hidden truth. There is hardly an incident or a moralization found in the Old Testament, and occasionally even in the New, which cannot be so interpreted. Hence the Bible becomes a kind of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Allegory has its place in all literature, but it is a dangerous weapon in the hands of the unskilled, and when it is coupled with the doctrine of private judgement, any situation can be explained away, any paradox resolved, any contradiction made reasonable. The analogical teaching of Jesus is at times clearly seen to be allegorical, and the same is true of some of the writings of the Old Testament prophets; but it can be recognized for what it is. This is very different from treating Scripture as a whole as one sustained allegory, or turning fact into symbol when no symbol is intended.

4. *Typological*. This method of interpretation is allied to the allegorical, and is in favour with a number of modern Roman Catholic scholars. It rests upon a theory of divine inspiration which assumes that the Holy Spirit directed the thoughts of scriptural writers towards future events of which they had no direct knowledge, but which they embodied in language which, in detail as in broad outline, typified what was yet to come. The Song of Songs was more than a love lyric; it was a 'type' of the union between Christ and his Church. The suffering servant of Yahweh was not merely a portrayal of the coming Messiah; it was a 'type' of the Passion of our Lord. All the details fitted; it was so intended by the Holy Spirit.

This is hindsight rather than foresight. The story of the Incarnation is in the Old Testament as well as in the New; but apart from the New it could neither be read nor understood.

Every one of these methods of interpretation have a certain value. Treated as literature, the Old Testament shines with a splendour which no translation can dim. However mistaken the literalists may be, they do emphasise the essential unity of Scripture. Kept in bounds, the allegorical treatment of certain incidents has everything to be said for it. Typology does draw attention to the fact that the Old Testament is a preparation for the fuller and more complete revelation found in the New.

II

What then can the translation of the Hebrew text into modern speech provide for the intelligent but uninstructed reader? For it must be understood that the intention behind this scholarly effort is not only to enable the Christian to appreciate his heritage, but to open the eyes of the non-Christian to the relevance of Christianity to the life of today and to his own personal attitude to revealed truth. This is an evangelical intention; it is an attempt to uncover the authority of the Word of God by enabling all men, as on the Day of Pentecost, to hear it in their own language. Scripture does not stand entirely in its own right; it is an instrument of the Gospel. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the translators of the Old Testament will feel it necessary to issue a short preface making clear two essential points.

First, the Old Testament is primarily a religious work and must be judged accordingly. It is a collection of writings of different periods and in varying styles, involving history, poetry, drama, legend, and myth, and these writings

have been edited and re-edited. They tell the story of a God who has revealed Himself to man only in so far as man has been able to respond to that revelation. We see man stumbling along in his effort to understand himself and the world about him, and to come to terms with the power or powers that he believed and hoped influenced his destiny. Line upon line, precept upon precept he learned in his groping, with many mistakes, failures, and misunderstandings, that God was One and not many, holy and not unjust, loving and not vindictive. He did not reach this conclusion easily. Nor can it be said that there was a steady progress from one stage to the next. There were constant lapses into idolatry, injustice, and hatred. Nevertheless, the word of God was heard and proclaimed, until the advent of the Word made flesh.

Secondly, it needs to be stated that the Old Testament fades into the New and is part of one revelation. That is the reason for making it part of the canon of Scripture. Many people feel that they have all they need in the New Testament for the understanding of the Christian Faith, and are inclined, if not to despise, at least to ignore the Old. It is true that the Old Testament is sub-Christian, but it was the Bible of Jesus, and His spirit was nourished by its wisdom. All that is necessary for salvation is contained in the Gospel story; but the story has its roots in the history of the past. It is true that its background is not in time, but in eternity; yet into the time process the eternal is continually breaking through.

All this is so well known to biblical scholars and theologians that they are inclined to leave to the preacher the task of communicating their findings to the people. But even if the preacher does his work well, he rarely speaks to any but his own congregation. If the New English Bible is to fulfil its task, it must come into the hands of those who criticize, or deny, or are indifferent to the teaching of the Church and the message of the Gospel. So far this has been in part successful, as is shown by the manner in which the translation of the New Testament has been received, thanks in large measure to the publicity given to it in the Press and on the radio. But we cannot count upon similar results when the translation of the Old Testament comes into the light of day; and extra, even extraordinary, efforts will be needed to persuade the uninstructed public, not only of its literary excellence, but of its profound religious significance. That the translators will find the right words for this generation need not be doubted. Can they go one step further in the art of communication by making explicit the evangelical intention which lies behind their efforts, and from the rich storehouse of Old Testament literature, in all its variety, extract the pure gold of revealed truth? However difficult this may prove to be, in some way or another it must be done.

To the suggestions made above, one slight addition may be made, which already may be in the minds of the translators. It is that each book should be headed with a sentence describing its purpose and its approximate date. This should put the separate works into their right category and perspective. The goal to which the new translation is moving and the end to which it is directed is to declare the revealed word of God to all mankind in this age. It is dedicated to the greater glory of God.

Recent Literature

EDITED BY JOHN T. WILKINSON

Studies in Biblical Theology. (S.C.M. Press.)

No. 29: *The Powers That Be*, by Clinton D. Morrison. (9s. 6d.)

The sub-title of this book clearly summarizes the problem with which it deals: 'Earthly Rulers and Demonic Powers in Romans 13₁₋₇'. The author is a young American scholar who has studied under the direction of Professor Oscar Cullmann at Basel. Readers of Cullmann's *Christ and Time* and *The State in the New Testament* will be aware of the new, 'theological' exegesis of Paul's famous passage about the State in Romans 13, which has become increasingly popular during the past quarter of a century. According to this exegesis, the term *exousiai* ('powers') in 13₁ must be understood in the light of the meaning which the same word bears in other Pauline passages (e.g. in Eph 6₁₂), i.e. as referring to spiritual, demonic powers. The exponents of this view cannot, of course deny that in the passage as a whole Paul has the secular, civil authorities in mind, but they argue that *exousiai* has a double significance, and justify their interpretation by reference to the Jewish belief in 'folk angels' who were placed over the nations. The essential background for the proper understanding of the passage is accordingly to be found in Paul's view of the spirit world. This type of exegesis has met with severe criticism from those who defend the traditional interpretation, according to which *exousiai* refers purely and simply to the earthly State authorities. In the first part of his essay Dr Morrison provides a full, clear and objective survey of this controversy. Albeit his own preference is perhaps to be detected in the chapter headings; the first and longest chapter, expounding the newer exegesis, is entitled 'A Positive Contribution', whereas the second, enumerating the criticisms, has its title 'The Negative Reaction'. The third and final chapter of Part I offers an evaluation of the problem, showing how the arguments on either side have created a position of what the author calls 'stalemate', and prepares the ground for Part II of the essay, in which Dr Morrison offers an 'Exegetical Contribution to the Interpretation of Romans 13₁₋₇', the aim of which is to break the stalemate. Very properly, he insists that Paul's words 'must be understood as part of a communication' to the Christians at Rome. This means that the terms he uses must bear the meaning they would have for those particular Christians. In a long and impressive discussion of 'the Graeco-Roman conception of the State in the Cosmos', the author shows that, 'far from being a peculiarity of Jewish apocalyptic', a 'strong and significant relationship between civil rulers and spiritual powers was commonly accepted in Graeco-Roman thought'. Thus he claims that the Roman Christians, as citizens of the Graeco-Roman world, would naturally understand *exousiai* in its double reference. On the other hand, they would understand the term 'God' in Romans 13₁₋₇ as Christians understand it, i.e. as 'Christ'. The problem of reconciling this interpretation with the undoubted emphasis in Paul's teaching upon Christ's victory over the powers Morrison solves by claiming that that victory had its locus, not among the powers as such (so as to deprive them of their freedom to continue their rebellious activity), but within the community of believers, in the lives of Christians. The plan of the book is admirably clear and its thesis is persuasively argued. It must take its place as a scholarly and significant contribution to an interesting and important problem of exegesis.

No. 30: *Newly Discovered Gnostic Writings*, by W. C. van Unnik. (7s. 6d.)

This 'preliminary survey of the Nag-Hammadi find' (to quote the book's sub-title) is a translation of a Dutch work by the distinguished Professor of New Testament in

the University of Utrecht. The recent publication of 'The Gospel of Thomas' has aroused a widespread interest in the discovery, made some fifteen years ago in Upper Egypt, of a large library of Gnostic manuscripts written in the Coptic language, and those whose interest has been so aroused will find in Dr. van Unnik's book an admirably lucid and concise introduction to the whole subject. It was written out of the conviction that, in addition to the ever-increasing volume of scholarly discussion in technical books and learned journals, 'there is room for an introduction of a more popular character, which will make clear for the layman what the discovery really signifies, and through which the general reader can form an impression of some, at any rate, of the principal writings now brought to light'. The opening chapter tells the story of the discovery at Nag-Hammadi and of the difficulties which, for a number of years, held up the work of examining the manuscripts with a view to publishing their text. This is followed by a list of the works contained in each of the thirteen codices involved, and an assessment of their character. The real significance of the discovery is found in the fact that 'it affords us opportunity to hear the Gnostics at first hand and to test the worth of what the Church writers have given us' by way of information about their doctrines. Next come two valuable chapters on 'The Background to Gnosticism' and its 'Encounter with Christianity'. The author then devotes a chapter each to four of the most important items in the library: 'The Gospel of Thomas' (published in 1959); 'The Gospel of Truth' (published in 1956); 'The Apocryphon of John' (a work previously known from what is called the Berlin MS. which was published in 1955. Three further versions of the work are comprised in the Nag-Hammadi library); and 'The Apocryphon of James (not yet published). Finally, in an Epilogue Dr van Unnik discusses the relevance of these newly discovered documents to, and their significance for, New Testament studies, indicating how they bear on the questions of the history of the canon, textual criticism, the tradition of the sayings of Jesus, and New Testament theology.

OWEN E. EVANS

A Living Sacrifice, a Study of Reparation, by E. L. Kendall, Ph.D. (S.C.M. Press, 21s.)

It is most vital that the growing together of separated Christians should take place primarily at the level of their differing types of spirituality. To kneel with a Christian from whom one is separated, to see God through his eyes, to love God with his heart, is the primary task for all engaged in the work of Christian reunion. Dr Kendall, in this learned, painstaking, and moving book, offers a unique opportunity to Protestants to enter into the meaning of reparation for Catholic Christians. The work of reparation, he writes, is 'the response of love and obedience to God in place of hatred indifference and rejection'. In this work, 'suffering may well be the most universal—because suffering was the instrument Christ himself used—means whereby Christians may share in the redemptive activity of God himself'. Expounding Colossians 1₂₄, he outlines both in theology and in actual practice how there can be a substitutionary element in Christian suffering. He quotes Dame Julian: 'Here I saw a part of the compassion of Our Lady Saint Mary: for Christ and she were so oned in love that the greatness of her loving was cause of the greatness of her pain.' As an Anglican Catholic, Dr Kendall draws upon the deep understanding of the work of reparation gained by monastic orders, whether Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Protestant. He quotes Mother Basilea of the Luterhan Sisterhood at Darmstadt: 'Let us ever remember that the Heart of Jesus suffers today—yes, today—just as it suffered during His passion. It could not be otherwise. The loving heart will always suffer while the beloved is not happy. Our Lord Jesus beholds His beloved, the souls for whom He has wrought salvation, in all the misery of their sin and affliction. His compassion fails not, but so many souls ignore it. And when it is ignored, deep grief

pierces the Holy Heart.' But his illustrations of the practice of Reparation are by no means confined to the monastic life. The Christian who sings with Charles Wesley—

*Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past*

is asked by Dr Kendall to consider such challenges as this: ' . . . he who pities another must leave his own place among the good people on the sunny side of the gap, must go out and find the other where he is—in the darkness, on the side of evil—and be ready to stay with him there; if he returns at all, it is with the other and at his pace'. All Christians who realize that being in Christ involves suffering with Christ should read this disturbing book, and ask themselves, in the light of it, whether they are suffering with Christ in the way He wills for them, and how they can offer their sufferings in union with Christ's for the advancement of His kingdom, the unity of His church and for the needs of all mankind.

ALAN B. WILKINSON

Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum, by Karl Barth. (S.C.M. Press, 25s.)

Few men have made so decisive contributions in such diverse parts of the theological fields as Anselm of Canterbury. Proofs of the existence of God are out of fashion, but no serious student of the philosophy of religion can afford to neglect the few pages in which Anselm expounded his proof. Satisfactionist theories of the Atonement are under a cloud, but no one who is genuinely interested in soteriology is unacquainted with the crucial pages of *Cur Deus Homo*? It might, however, be thought that Professor Karl Barth would be the last person to take an interest in a proof of the existence of God. Yet in 1931, in the Preface to the first German edition of this book, he deemed Anselm's proof 'in the context of his theological Scheme a model piece of good, penetrating, and neat theology' (Eng. Tr., p.9), and in 1958, in the Preface to the second German edition, he says: 'in this book on Anselm I am working with a vital key, if not the key, to an understanding of that whole process of thought that has impressed me more and more in my *Church Dogmatics* as the only one proper to theology' (ibid, p.11). The German original was called simply *Fides Quaerens Intellectum*; and we have only to reflect that for Anselm, even in the proof, faith preceded understanding to see why he is so congenial to Professor Barth. He does not confine his study to the brief passage to which we have referred but makes use of a detailed knowledge of the whole corpus of Anselm's works in order to illuminate his theme. He first considers the whole theological scheme, the necessity for and the possibility, conditions, manner, and aim of theology, thus supplying a complete set of prolegomena to theology; then, after dealing with the presuppositions of the proof, he supplies a commentary, sentence by sentence, on Proslogion 2-4. The conclusion is that this was completely misunderstood both by Gaunilo and by Aquinas, that it is not an *a priori* philosophical system at all, that it should not be called the 'ontological proof', that it is altogether different from the teaching of Descartes and Leibniz, with which it is often confused, and that it is not remotely affected by the well-known passage in Kant which is commonly supposed to have demolished the ontological argument. 'We can but cast the mantle of charity over the fact that in this context later participants in the discussion even spoke of the winged horse Pegasus and of—"a hundred dollars"!' (p.95n). We might add that it is all theology and not philosophy of religion, even though it might not be overlooked by those who study that subject (but if Anselm and Barth are right, what is the status of that subject?) and that to regard Anselm as a sort of earlier Descartes is rather like regarding the satisfactionist theory as an early form of the penal theory. As can be seen, Professor Barth displays what he calls, though he is not speaking of himself, 'the fighting spirit obviously

indispensable to one engaged on theological work' (p.16), but for the most part the book is severely technical. It is a clue to the *Church Dogmatics*; it is not the *Church Dogmatics* made easy. There is a French translation, *La Preuve de l'Existence de Dieu*, made from the first German edition and published in 1958 by Delachaux & Niestlé. The English translation, published in 1960, in 'The Library of Philosophy and Theology', is from the second German edition, but there is no great difference. In the English translation five lines from the bottom of p.73 the word *maius* has fallen out of a vital sentence, and, where that word appears at p.74, line 2, the translation is plainly wrong; nor is it altogether happy at the bottom of p.127. The book may not convince anyone, but no one should write another word about Anselm's proof until he has read it.

A. RAYMOND GEORGE

Sex and Love in the Bible, by William Graham Cole. (Hodder and Stoughton, 21s.) Dr Cole is an American who in 1956 gave us one of the most penetrating studies of sex from the Christian angle that we have received in recent times. His *Sex in Christianity and Psychoanalysis* was excellent, marking a new religious approach to the problems involved. It has to be said that his latest book, *Sex and Love in the Bible*, nowhere touches the level of his first. Indeed, compared with English studies such as David Mace's *Hebrew Marriage*, and Sherwin Bailey's *Man Woman Relationship in Christian Thought*, it is disappointing. The Biblical doctrine of sex and love is worthy of a more theological and detailed treatment than it here receives. The Author writes of divine and human love separately, a doubtful dichotomy, and then goes on to speak of the sex customs of Judaism and the early Church. He sketches very well the background of Oriental fertility rites with their emphasis on sex. There are chapters on Pre-marital Sex Relations, Sex in Marriage, Prostitution, Homosexuality, and other deviations. The book concludes with what is its most pertinent section, a vivid and down-to-earth treatment of Biblical teaching in relation to the sexual *mores* of today. Several points may be raised. The family in Old Testament times surely counted for more than Dr Cole would have us believe, or has he tried to compress too much into too short a space, thus falling into superficiality? In the first three chapters he brings in too much extraneous matter that has little to do with his subject. Is it true that the mystery religions were indifferent to the morality of their members? There is much in the literature to point the other way. This may be one of the pitfalls of a too general picture of the incursions of the Oriental religions into Rome. Certain clinical observations may be made where long experience as a marriage counsellor differs from the author's conclusions. It is doubtful whether, as he avers, a good marriage makes a good sex life and a bad marriage a bad one. In actual experience, the physical side of the marriage often goes on quite undisturbed by its quality. On homosexuality the author fails to account adequately for its causes. He traces its origin to fears whereas more often it is due to abnormal identification with the mother. Taking it as a whole, the book has too many general assumptions which are not always in line with the latest research. Yet in other matters there is much to commend: the careful sketching in of the ethnological background, the excellent defence of the Christian attitude opposing pre-marital sex relations, the strong plea for the training of the Ministry in these matters, and especially that sex education should begin at an earlier age than it does now. When Dr Cole comes into the practical arena, he reveals the incisive thinker of his earlier book. Yet he seems to know little of British conditions, as revealed by the fact that he never once mentions the Marriage Guidance Movement here. Throughout he speaks much of liberty, refusing to condemn those whose sexual habits are different. In this he is undoubtedly right. Yet he leaves unanswered the fundamental question: What is Christian liberty? The Church has yet to make up her mind as to what is a truly Christian doctrine of

sex. The Lady Chatterley case shows that at present she speaks with a divided voice. It is the overriding merit of this book that it forces that question on the conscience of Christians. One regrets that there is no index and no references or bibliography.

JOHN CROWLESMITH

The British Journal of Criminology, Vol. I, No. 1, July 1960. 12s. 6d.

Pioneers in Criminology. Edited by Hermann Mannheim. (Stevens & Sons Ltd. 45s.)

For the past ten years the Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency has published a quarterly journal entitled *The British Journal of Delinquency*. The name of the publication has now been changed to *The British Journal of Criminology*, though the word 'delinquency' has been retained in a sub-title. The reason for this change is interesting. It is that over the past decade the term 'criminology' has acquired a broader connotation. It is no longer limited to the processes of 'police science', and is now regarded as the best word to describe the scope of the inquiry covered by the *Journal*. This is defined by the Editor in describing the policy of the Institute: 'to promote research into the diagnosis, etiology, treatment, and prevention of crime, drawing our information from any field of scientific inquiry that touches, however remotely, on these subjects'. This first number of the new series contains articles on 'The Indadequate Personality', 'The Habitual Criminal', 'A Case of Neurotic Exhibitionism', 'Delinquency in Industrial Areas', and 'Research and Methodology', together with some useful book reviews.

Pioneers in Criminology contains accounts of the work of seventeen pioneers in the field of criminological research. Many of them would scarcely have regarded themselves as wearing this particular label; the reason why they are now so described is the more comprehensive range of studies grouped under the term, and referred to in the previous paragraph. In his Introduction, Hermann Mannheim surveys the international developments in criminology and refers to the various schools of thought exemplified in the chapters which follow. What he writes does not make easy reading, but all will agree with his conclusion that 'no single "school" is likely to resolve all the contradictions and dilemmas inherent in the penal problem'. Cesare Beccaria, whose life and work are dealt with in the second chapter of the book, was born in 1738. William Adrian Bouger, who is the subject of Chapter 18, lived from 1876 to 1940. As the chapters are arranged in chronological order, it will be seen that the book covers some 200 years, during which time the approach to what we now call 'criminology' has undergone many changes. It is interesting to notice the influences which shaped the thinking of the men who are described here. I found the chapter on Cesare Lombroso particularly useful. There has been much controversy about the significance and value of his work, and Chapter 9 attempts to correct the misunderstandings of those who have failed to appreciate the impetus given to the study of the offender by his challenging ideas. The final chapter on 'The Historical Development of Criminology', having referred to the way in which the Classical School focused attention on the crime, and how the Positive School shifted the emphasis to the criminal, concludes with the judgement that 'more attention needs to be paid to the meaning of crime in terms of criminal law, social structure and social charge.'

Restitution to Victims of Crime, by Stephen Schafer. (Stevens & Sons, 25s.)

The importance of this book is that it combines two necessary aspects of penal theory. The first is the consideration which must be given to the victims of crime, a matter which is finding vigorous expression today; and the second is the emphasis on the remedial aspect of the punishment meted out to those who break the law. When

State action was substituted for private vengeance, its main object was to appease the injured party, and stress was laid on the offering of monetary compensation according to the extent of the injury done; but in course of time the rights of the victim were dissociated from penal law and fines were paid to the state. Much could be done to assuage the public clamour for more sympathy with the victims of crime if greater stress were laid on restitution or compensation to those who suffer financial loss or physical damage at the hands of criminals. At the same time, the criminal himself is likely to benefit from the effort he makes to undo, as far as is possible, the damage he has done. He should be required to pay part of his wages to the victim of his crime. If he is sentenced to imprisonment, a portion of his earnings there should be deducted to repay those whom he has wronged. The fact that he is helping to support a family whose breadwinner he has murdered or disabled might assist considerably in his own rehabilitation. By doing something positive to make good the damage he has done, his sense of responsibility will be strengthened and the emotions which motivated the offence will be redirected into better channels. Punitive restitution is an instrument through which guilt can be felt, understood, and alleviated. It is not suggested that punishment should be entirely replaced by restitution or that the rich man should be allowed to buy his way out of criminal responsibility. In cases where the offender is unable to pay the whole of the damages, the State would supplement his contribution from a compensation fund. The greater part of the book is devoted to an account of the practice in no less than thirty other countries, and many useful points emerge from this comparative study. Dr Schafer, a native of Budapest who escaped to England during the Hungarian uprising and who is now Reader in Criminology and Penology at the University of Maryland, U.S.A., has given us an eminently readable and valuable book, and in view of the British Home Secretary's avowed interest in this aspect of penal theory, it may well be that some of his proposals will soon be acted upon in the courts of this land. The author admits that all the problems are not solved. How far the criminal law should take over some of the functions of civil law is a matter for further investigation. Nevertheless, here is a challenging treatise on a most vital subject.

J. ARTHUR HOYLES

An Introduction to Religious Sociology, Pioneer Work in France, by F. Boulard.

Translated, with an Introduction by M. J. Jackson. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 21s.)

This book aims to do three things: to be an introduction to the methods of religious sociology, to present the results of some painstaking sociological analysis of French Roman Catholicism, and to consider the relation between the findings of religious sociology and the practice and theology of Christian mission. Appropriately enough, it is edited and translated for English readers by the Rev. Michael Jackson, leader of the Industrial Mission of the Diocese of Sheffield, the successor to Canon E. R. Wickham (now Bishop of Middleton), whose *Church and People in an Industrial City* (1957) is the only really comparable work produced in England in recent times. The basis of such work is Luke 14₂₃: 'For which of you desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he hath wherewith to complete it?' Canon Boulard writes: 'only rigorous impartial observation of the facts can produce legitimate conclusions for formulating policy. . . . But—and it is hardly necessary to say it—sociology does not replace knowledge of the word of God, nor preaching matured in prayer, nor the quest for personal sanctity.' Such sociology is not a form of determinism, rather 'facts themselves force the conclusion upon us that the all-powerful activity of divine grace respects the working of natural causes'. The history of an area, the nature of the work of its inhabitants, the class composition of the population produce an environment either generally favourable or unfavourable to the operation

of grace. So in one French parish, the smallholders maintain a fair level of religious practice as do the wives of tradesmen and artisans. All the professional people come to Easter Communion, as do most retired women. But hardly any of the farm-workers and none of the industrial workers practise at all. In a parish in Brittany all the small farmers practise, but only two of the forty families of the quarrymen are practising Church-people. Then there are whole regions in France 'where for several centuries the grace of God seems to have been without effect'. A whole region of north-east France practised up to the middle of the 19th century when it was a region of small family farms, and then largely fell away from religion when the transition was made to large-scale farming. 'When a factory is built in a region of strong religious practice it introduces a tendency to religious indifference.' Until the Church comes to an accurate understanding of the kind of people to whom she is ministering in each particular case, she spends a good deal of her time shadow-boxing. In certain industrial areas of Western Europe where the rapid industrialization has been foreseen and accepted by the Church, she has been able to minister to the population effectively. In the mining areas of Dutch Limburg, 90 per cent. of the population make their Easter Communion. But in the city of Marseilles only 3.3 per cent of workers, men and women over fourteen, attend Mass. Too often there has been little understanding that people belong to cultural, class, working, industrial, or regional communities which affect their approach to religion. 'Certain regions appear to us now to have remained almost untouched for several centuries by the deepest Christian values, despite an authentic, persistent programme of mission. If the Christian conception of life has never really penetrated the inhabitants of certain regions, some questions must be asked. Have we tried to analyse and understand sympathetically their regional mentality? What brought it into being? Have we been too quick to despise their own kind of spontaneous reactions, because they were clearly imperfect, rather than to start from them?' This is such a profoundly important book that it is a pity that it is so abrupt in form, so continually overloaded with footnotes and appendices, and that it has no index. However, there is an extensive Bibliography, divided into French, English, and American sections. Perhaps one of the meanings of the Parable of the Unjust Steward for our times is that we should apply the same careful planning and forethought to Christian mission as we do to the organization and propagation of a large-scale business enterprise. Is our refusal to take religious sociology seriously in this country a cowardice to face the indictment it would produce?

ALAN B. WILKINSON

An Experimental Liturgy, by G. Cope, J. G. Davies, and D. A. Tytler. (Lutterworth Press, 7s. 6d.)

Since this book appeared two years ago, it has been the object of study and discussion all over the world, according to one of its authors, replying in *Theology* (July 1959) to some of the criticisms of it. This eucharistic liturgy is the most successful attempt made in England to get back behind the essentially medieval rites of both Catholic and Reformed traditions, to an expression of the wholeness of the worship in the Early Church, and to the biblical categories of thought which nourished its roots. 'Our primary objective', the authors write, 'has been to produce an order of service which is really *corporate*, i.e. a "liturgy" which really is a "work of the people" in the sense that *all* the people of God in the congregation—clergy and laity—have an active part to play.' Besides the liturgy itself, the authors offer a most valuably succinct introductory essay on theological and liturgical principles, a useful running commentary on the liturgy itself, and a pastorally minded concluding essay on 'Eucharistic Symbolism and Imagery'. Written by three Anglican priests deeply committed to the principles of the Liturgical Reformation, it naturally has constant ecumenical

implications and insights. It ought to be discussed by every group of clergy. It should then be used as a basis for the instruction of the laity in fundamental liturgical principles, so that the avalanche of new modes of worship which is advancing as the liturgical ice age comes to an end will not overwhelm congregations as they see the old confessional and theological landmarks swept away. 'Avalanche' is not too strong a word for the movement of which this book is a conspicuously attractive example, when one reads that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Aberdeen has so completely stripped and rearranged his Cathedral in the interests of primitive simplicity that it is commonly mistaken for a Presbyterian church. It is a great pity that the language of the *Experimental Liturgy* is so unadventurously like that of the 1928 Prayer Book, not very successfully repatched and renovated Cranmer.

ALAN B. WILKINSON

The Day of Light, the Biblical and Liturgical Meaning of Sunday, by H. B. Porter. (S.C.M. Press, 7s. 6d.)

Professor Porter surveys the meaning of Sunday in the Bible and the Early Church. Beginning with the Genesis story of the Creation of Light on the first day of the week, he outlines the meaning of the Jewish Sabbath. To keep the Sabbath proclaimed the supremacy of Law. To keep the Lord's Day proclaims the Gospel of the One who rose again on that day. The Day of Resurrection is the Day of the New Light, of the first-fruits of the New Creation. It is also the Day of the Spirit. As at the dawn of Creation He brooded on the face of the waters, so at Pentecost He came to fill the New Israel, the Body of the Second Adam with divine life. Drawing upon material familiar to all who know their *Shape of the Liturgy*, Professor Porter shows how, for the Early Church, the Sunday Eucharist proclaimed the whole Gospel of Creation and Redemption. It was only on a Sunday (and normally only on Easter Day) that the complex pattern of early Christian initiation with its drama of renunciations, affirmations, immersions, anointings, and First Communion was enacted. In passing he outlines the gradual eclipse of the supremacy of Sunday in Catholic Christendom by weekday worship, though he seems unaware of modern Roman Catholic liturgical reform which reasserts the pre-eminence of the Sunday liturgy. This useful collection of material seems to lack an eschatological understanding of Sunday, and one looks in vain for a systematic application of theological principles (in the manner of Fr Martin Thornton) to modern pastoral situations.

ALAN B. WILKINSON

On Being the Church in the World, by J. A. T. Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich. (S.C.M. Press, 16s.)

Since he left *academe* for his Suffragan Bishopric, Dr John Robinson has achieved a certain public fame, if not notoriety, but this is only fresh evidence of his passionate conviction that theology must be related to life, and that what has often passed for the purest Christian orthodoxy of doctrine or morals may prove to be somewhat polluted when compared with its New Testament source. It is good to know that his present dignity is likely to make possible an increase rather than a diminution of his published works, even though they may henceforth be more in the nature of occasional papers in which scholarship is pressed into the service of the plain parson. This volume consists of lectures, articles, and sermons produced over a period of ten years or so. Their substance will be familiar to those who know Dr Robinson or the Liturgical Movement. To others they will form an admirable and most comprehensive introduction to certain very significant trends of contemporary religious thought. Especially should Methodists read them, for some of these developments seem to have passed us by. Here, for instance, we find a Theology of the House Church, an exposition of the Priesthood of All Believers (which Dr Robinson calls, more properly,

the Priesthood of the Church), and three lectures on Matter, Power, and Liturgy—the association of the three is important—which among other things contain a striking statement of the pacifist–non-pacifist dilemma, and an awareness that the Christian may need to undertake a radical reappraisal of the realities of power. The peroration of the sermon on 'The Gospel and Politics' is great preaching by any standards. There is also some timely advice on the way forward from the Intercommunion impasse. Concélébration—two or more ministers of different Churches presiding at one Table—is Dr Robinson's interim solution. He is convinced that 'it is by the partaking of the one loaf that we, who are many are made one Body', and that to make unified ministries the prerequisite of this is impracticable and misguided. In these papers there is High Churchmanship as distinct from High Clericalism, and the theological basis for the Macleodian insistence that the Christian mysteries shall burst their pietistic bounds, and be visible in the whole life of mankind. We must, however, question whether the sermon, 'Preaching Death', is altogether faithful to Scripture. Certainly its slick undergraduate manner and its lack of interest in the destiny of the individual make it pastorally inadequate, even though it may correct a certain false balance. And is it really the case that Christian piety has confused Jordan with Styx? (p.131). The image is too Scriptural to justify this assertion, supported as it is by an Anglican bowdlerization of Charles Wesley. But elsewhere in the book, Dr Robinson's eschatological re-statements are more satisfying.

GORDON S. WAKEFIELD

Methodism Mocked: the Satiric Reaction to Methodism in the Eighteenth Century,
by Albert M. Lyles. (Epworth Press, 25s.)

Anthony Trollope wrote in *Barchester Towers*: 'No one but a preaching clergyman has, in these realms, the power of compelling an audience to sit silent, and be tormented.' Had Trollope been able to read *Methodism Mocked*, he might have paused. It was not always thus. This book opens up new ground, for although the theme has long stared historians in the face through the wealth of material painstakingly gathered and neatly docketed for them by Richard Green in his famous list of over 600 'anti-Methodist publications', Mr Lyles has been left a clear field, and good use he has made of it. It is said that the pen is mightier than the sword, and the theme of this book might well be used to support such a thesis. The hostility of mobs, the intolerance of clergymen, and the weighted scales of justice as administered by eighteenth-century magistrates were a mere bagatelle compared with the potency of the printed word directed against the early Methodists. Lord Sidmouth's description in the House of Lords in 1812 of the Methodist preachers as 'blacksmiths, cobblers, tailors, pedlars, chimney-sweepers, and what not' has often been quoted as 'near the bone', but Lord Sidmouth was being excessively polite by the standards of the previous century. The scurrility, obscenity, and vulgarity of the attacks upon the early Methodists in pamphlets, cartoons, and broadsheets make *Lady Chatterley's Lover* seem, by comparison, suitable bedside reading for the modern kindergarten. Mr Lyles has combed his material judiciously and arranged it clearly and logically. A prefatory chapter helps us in advance to understand the nature of eighteenth-century satire and its relation to Methodism; and then the attack is seen directed against Wesley and Whitefield, against their preachers and people, against their doctrines and practices. Innumerable quotations are given from contemporary writers; whilst five facsimile plates give some idea of the amount of insidious propaganda which can be crammed into a title-page or a cartoon, making even Hogarth seem like an amateur.

All this belongs to history. In Southeby's *After Blenheim* little Wilhelmine asks old Kaspar:

*Now tell us all about the war
And what they fought each other for.*

Methodism Mocked prompts a similar question, and for the answer the reader must turn to Wesley's *Sermons* and *Journal*. Even so, it is hard to believe that early Methodism, if it in any way resembled its modern counterpart, could arouse the hatred and invective which these lampoons reveal. It needs more courage to face the pen than the sword, and Mr Lyles's pages call forth again our admiration for our fathers in the faith. He has shown us, in a new and interesting way, that in every skirmish in the age-long battle against falsehood and evil, truth and goodness must prevail.

WESLEY F. SWIFT

Primitive Physic, by John Wesley. With an Introduction by A. Wesley Hill. (Epworth Press, 12s. 6d.)

Primitive Physic was first published in 1747. In revised and enlarged forms, it reached a 23rd edition in Wesley's lifetime and a 32nd in 1828. These are significant facts which do not accord with the ridicule which, in later times, has been levelled against the book, and they go far to justify the advice which Wesley gave to the Bristol Society in 1768: 'No Methodist ought to be without the *Primitive Physic* which (if you have any regard for your bodies or your children) ought to be in every Methodist home.' This edition, beautiful in printing and format, will add greatly to its prestige, as will the illuminating and fascinating Introduction by the Rev. A. Wesley Hill, M.D. Dr Hill holds, with reason, that there were few in the country at that time so well qualified to practise the healing art, in respect both of knowledge and disposition, as John Wesley. That he was a pioneer in the use of electrical treatment is well known. He insists on the values of plain food, water, fresh air, regular exercise, early retiring, and rising, cleanliness in house and person. All this is common place today, but was far from being so in his time. With the poor specially in mind, he points out that the remedies are simple, cheap, and easily obtainable and applied. He is concerned to save even the few who could afford it from the treatment of professional men, so many of whom lacked skill and had more regard for their pockets, than their patients. Should professional advice be necessary, he repeatedly urges: 'apply to a Physician who fears God'. Like the Lord whom he served, Wesley recognized the close connexion between mind and body and, with astonishing prescience, urged in certain cases close co-operation between minister and doctor. No one who would *know* John Wesley should miss this book and its Introduction. To those who have hitherto regarded him as almost solely concerned with the spiritual and mental well-being of men, this book will prove a valuable corrective, helping toward a full-length portrait that exhibits him as also a great humanitarian. The publication of this delightful edition is a venture of faith which we trust will be abundantly justified by a wide circulation among appreciative readers.

W. L. DOUGHTY

African Development and Education in Southern Rhodesia, by Franklin Parker. (Ohio State University Press, \$1.75.)

This monograph, outcome of a year's research grant from the Kappa Delta Pi Education Society, is a good example of the limits within which a visitor from outside can help a given situation. Those who have served African education in Southern Rhodesia through mission or Government rely, as we all do, on personal memory as they assess their work. This historian's view can give them a new perspective. Not all its judgements will prove correct, but this careful outside impression, if read with humility, can help those on the spot. Southern Rhodesian African Education is founded on a broad base and a narrow apex; hence the paucity of secondary schools. One aspect of this has been the too carefully supervised promotion of African staff to positions of authority. What Dr Parker says of the direct system of reserve government is true of education: 'This policy has curtailed local initiative and the

development of positive constructive leadership.' The missions have had to follow Government's lead, as in official approval of African ministers to be managers of schools, but Government policy has not always been challenged with conviction. Dr Parker asks pertinent questions about the future place of the Churches in school education. Their help is urgently needed for a rapid development of secondary schools. What of the time and money devoted to primary schools? This is an old problem: an area of acute need; the Church responds; after two generations it has lost its mobility and acquired a vested interest which leads to denominational rivalry. Further, can the Church afford to be a large employer of labour, with a test of Church membership for a man's job? And work is left undone: urban community and youth work. This is seen as challenging the Church to unity in order that, with pooled resources, the community may be served at the point of its greatest need today.

T. ALLAN BEETHAM

The Christian Mission Today. (New York: Abingdon Press, \$3)

This symposium was prepared by the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church in the United States at the request of their Department of Ministerial Training, specifically for use in the pastors' summer schools. Hence the purpose: 'To help ministers and laymen to rethink the mission of the Christian church, and their part in it.' The book falls into five parts, concerned respectively with Motives, the Church in America, the Mission Overseas, a World of Change, Task of Minister and People, each taken for the most part in a Methodist context. Of the twenty-one contributors, all qualified by their competence, experience, and insight to handle the topics assigned, fifteen are American Methodists, the rest comprising Anglican, Baptist, Congregationalist, Irish Methodist, and Norwegian Methodist. The casting of such a far-flung net of topics, with a strictly limited compass of exposition, might be thought to invite superficiality of treatment and a descent into vague generality and pious exhortation, but this for the most part does not happen. There is offered a very much down-to-earth survey of the contemporary scene in its concrete particulars as the arena of Christian witness, which carries its own incisive challenge. The two fronts, stated in geographical and national terms—home and overseas—may be briefly noticed. Methodists in America are described as a predominantly middle-class denomination, and the Church as facing a difficult task in an affluent society. Americans generally are classed as status-seekers (they are not alone in that), and Vance Packard's analysis in his recent book of that title is supported. The total situation has many features familiar in the United Kingdom; indeed, one is aware of the continued relevance of R. H. Tawney's acute analysis in *The Sickness of an Acquisitive Society*. Social change in urban life may be almost cataclysmic: thus in New York City (admittedly an exceptional unit) in the period 1950-7 some 750,000 continental whites were lost to the suburbs and an influx of Negro and Puerto Rican immigrants to the tune of 650,000 poured in. At the rural extreme there are said to be more than one million farm families living on marginal farms in the South. The challenge on the home front is not to tinker with the symptoms of social malaise, but, having diagnosed the disease itself, to offer treatment through the everlasting gospel of which the Church is custodian. The presentation of contemporary overseas demand is preceded by concise historical summaries of American Methodist enterprise in Asia—China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Sarawak, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Malaya, Burma; in Africa—Algeria, Liberia, Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia; and in Latin America from Mexico to the Argentine. In default of access to Barclay's standard *History of Methodist Missions*, of which three volumes have so far appeared, these chapters provide a valuable survey of the work in forty-four countries in all continents. No more can be done here than to record some pointers significant for the Christian Mission

today. Population in Asia is increasing at a faster rate than Christian conversion; as it has been succinctly put: 'The birth-rate is moving ever farther ahead of the rebirth-rate.' Again, non-Christian religions, stirred from a long lethargy, are once more on the march, with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam in particular all claiming a world mission. In an excellent paper on 'Younger Churches and New Nations', C. W. Ranson, with all the authority of his I.M.C. leadership (though now transferred to the specific task of the Theological Education Fund under the Council), faces the hard realities of the world today: 'New nations', yet still in the first stage after independence with very far to go; 'New Churches', yet for the most part 2 per cent. or less of the nation, with serious limitations and a still precarious position. 'The fact remains that these young churches, drawn mainly from the most primitive sections of the community, present very serious problems in Christian nurture and discipline'. There are the generally high incidence of illiteracy, all too often a low level of spiritual and ethical achievement, and the dearth of indigenous Christian leadership. Yet he concludes: 'The younger churches are significant not because of what they are, but because of the gospel which they have received'. Bishop Stephen Neill, with characteristic verve, points to 'The Urgency of this Mission Today'. Granting that the prevailing theological outlook that gave a sense of urgency in the nineteenth century has gone for good, he yet asserts: 'The dangers to which the church is exposed today might well startle Christians out of their usual complacent lethargy. It is just the fact that the Christian churches are threatened today as they have not been for a thousand years.' Let one incident, in conclusion, give food for thought. A missionary in Ceylon was asked by a Buddhist priest for the loan of books about Christianity. 'I didn't know you were interested in Christianity.' 'I am not, but I have to train young monks going as missionaries to the West, and I want them to know something of the religion of the natives before they get there.'

CHARLES P. GROVES

Introduction to Christianity, by Paul Hessert. (George Allen & Unwin, 1960. 30s.) This book, by a Professor at Wesleyan University, Illinois, was first published in America in 1958. It is a comprehensive survey of the main outlines of the Christian Faith, and is intended to serve as an Introduction to the Christian way of life. The author recognises that being a Christian is more than holding right doctrines, or understanding Christian affirmations, but within these limitations it is good 'to give a wider perspective of the Christian understanding of God and man, and their relationship to each other' (p.17). Professor Hessert avoids most of the obvious pitfalls in writing such a *conspicetus* of the Faith. The book is very wide in range, perhaps even too wide for the purpose in mind. But even in the small space available to each subject, there are some useful insights into the meaning of the Faith. The language is simple and direct, and does not assume any advanced understanding of Christian terminology. A serious attempt is made to meet the situation of those who begin with scientific assumptions, and the whole exposition is based on Christian experience, which is a commendable insight. Hessert expounds a Biblical orthodoxy, which looks upon faith as the encounter with God in Christ which is known in the Church. He is particularly helpful on Revelation, Redemption, the problem of evil, and the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The discussion of the Sacraments, the Ministry, the application of the faith, and the Christian Hope, seem less satisfactory. It is especially encouraging to see Justification explained without recourse to too much psychological jargon. The book inevitably suffers a little in being transplanted into English soil, but not more than can be expected. It is on the whole free from American jargon, and in one footnote (p.291) the author implies that 'American' can sometimes mean the whole Western hemisphere, which is a sobering thought! This is a most useful work,

which can be whole-heartedly recommended to anyone looking for a comprehensive and readable introduction to Christianity. It should be valuable to all kinds of students. It will help the scientists to see the whole range and challenge of the Faith, and it should help theological students by providing a good survey of a sound theology. It is an object lesson in readable and direct exposition of the main beliefs of Christians. In the space available, it is not to be expected that full account can be given of the various opinions of scholars on many subjects. When he is faced with real differences of view, as, for instance, regarding the Second Coming, the author wisely contents himself with stating the different views, without attempting to argue which is right. The price of the book is bound to limit its readership, but it could hardly be cheaper without being considerably shorter. Perhaps a shorter book would have been better, but this is a book much to be recommended, and one that should be widely used.

WILLIAM STRAWSON

The Epistle to the Romans, by Franz J. Leenhardt. (Lutterworth Press, 45s.)

Although the word 'church' only occurs in the last chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Professor Franz J. Leenhardt claims that the problem of the Church is the Epistle's central theme. Paul is attempting to show the unity and continuity of God's people through the ages. He is writing about the Church in its evolution. This theme is 'the horizon to which all the main lines of the thought expounded in the letter tend'. It is wrong, Professor Leenhardt argues, to assume that the main part of the epistle is concluded in the eighth chapter. Chapters 9, 10, and 11, ought not to be dismissed as secondary. They are integral to the thought of the Epistle. 'What we do about these three chapters', he asserts, 'is the touchstone of our interpretation of the entire work.' It is quite clear what Professor Leenhardt does about these three chapters. He describes how they relate the doctrine of justification by faith to God's dealing with His people in history. Professor Leenhardt's discussion of imputed righteousness (Rom 4:22) is important. Righteousness, he claims, is not to be regarded as a quality inherent in man or attributable to him. It can be understood only in terms of the relationship between God and man. When Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as righteousness, that righteousness was both God's and Abraham's. So Abraham was truly just. And his righteousness did not consist of obedience to the law, but of his response to God's initiative and his refusal to attempt to create a righteousness of his own. According to Professor Leenhardt, the inner conflict which Paul describes in Chapter 7 of the Epistle is not autobiographical. It does not refer to Paul's personal experience either before or after his conversion. It describes the crisis into which a Judaizing Christian would enter when he wanted to complete his salvation by means of works. It describes the situation of any Christian who relapses into legalism and moralism. The predestinarian interpretation of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of the Epistle is rejected by Professor Leenhardt. Paul, he says, is concerned not with the destiny of individuals, but with the destiny of God's people, the people of Israel, and the people of the Christian Church. In any case, Professor Leenhardt argues, Paul does not put forward a deterministic account of God's dealings with men. God constrains men by His love. Such activity excludes the rigid alternatives of determinism and indeterminism. The great merit of Professor Leenhardt's book is that many of his comments are original and at the same time persuasive. The commentary is a translation from the French, and its author is a professor in the University of Geneva. It is a lengthy work, but the author's grip on Paul's thought always compels attention. Even when he is saying things which every commentator on the Epistle is expected to say, he is able to give new insight into Paul's thought. There is no index to the commentary. There are no descriptive titles to the chapters or the paragraphs of the Epistle, and although the verses on which the author is commenting are clearly indicated, the chapter numbers

are not given on each page. For these reasons it is not an easy commentary to refer to. But those readers who are prepared to search its pages will be richly rewarded. Professor Leenhardt clears away several misunderstandings and brings light to many dark places.

ARTHUR W. WAINWRIGHT

NOTABLE ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

The Expository Times, January 1961.

Hellenistic Thought in New Testament Times: The Epicureans—II, by William Barclay.
Roman Catholic Biblical Scholarship, by the Abbot of Downside.

The Will of God: in the Fourth Gospel, by G. B. Caird.

The Expository Times, February 1961.

Hellenistic Thought in New Testament Times: The Epicureans—III, by William Barclay.
The Concept of Man as a Soul, by R. Laurin.

The Will of God: in Paul, by J. A. Allan.

The Expository Times, March 1961.

Hellenistic Thought in New Testament Times: The Stoics—I, by William Barclay.
The Will of God: in the Epistle to the Hebrews, by F. J. Taylor.

What was the Original Sin?, by John Wren-Lewis.

The Expository Times, April 1961.

Hellenistic Thought in New Testament Times: The Stoics—II, by William Barclay.

Under-estimated Theological Books: Alexander Nairne's, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, by G. B. Caird.

Significant Modern Writers—The Two Worlds in Modern Literature, by Norman Nicholson.

The Harvard Theological Review, January 1961.

The Permanent Truth in the Idea of Natural Religion, by John F. Smith.

The Use of St. John Chrysostom in sixteenth-century Controversy, by R. J. Schoeck.

The 'Suffering Servant' and Milton's Heroic Norm, by John M. Steadman.

Francis Greenwood Peabody: Harvard's Theologian of the Social Gospel, by Jurgen Herbst.

The Hibbert Journal, January 1961.

A Symposium on 'A Strategy for Higher Education' figures prominently in this issue, and is represented by eight important articles. In addition: Freedom and Immortality, by Professor H. D. Lewis.

Interpretation, January 1961.

A series of four articles on the Book of Deuteronomy. In addition: The Interpretation of the Old Testament, by Martin Noth.

Theology Today, January 1961.

Space Travel and Space Theology, by W. B. Easton, Jr.

Tradition as a Protestant Problem, by R. A. Brown.

Theological Studies in College and Seminary, by P. Ramsey.

The Nuclear Dilemma, with a Non to Kierkegaard, by R. M. McFadden.

Theological Table-talk, by G. S. Hendry.

The International Review of Missions, January 1961.

A Survey of the Year 1960.

Has the Christian Faith been adequately represented?, by K. A. Busia.

Obedience and Freedom in Christian Theology, by Jose Miguez-Bonino.

The International Review of Missions, April 1961.

St Patrick's Missionary Methods, by William Henry Scott.

'One New Man': Success or Failure in Christian Mission, by Dr A. Capell.

Missions and Education in the Pacific, by E. V. Newman.

New Industrial Frontiers in the Philippines, by R. P. Poethig.

Chinese Tradition and the Modern World, by R. P. Kramers.

The Christian's Knowledge of Non-Christian Religions, by H. H. Prester.

Scottish Journal of Theology, March 1961.

Jonathan Edwards' Conception of Freedom of Will, by W. P. Jeanes.

The Church and the Historical Jesus, by W. Nicholls.

The Holy Spirit and the Word of God, by G. Young.

Death and Life in Christ, by R. Berry.

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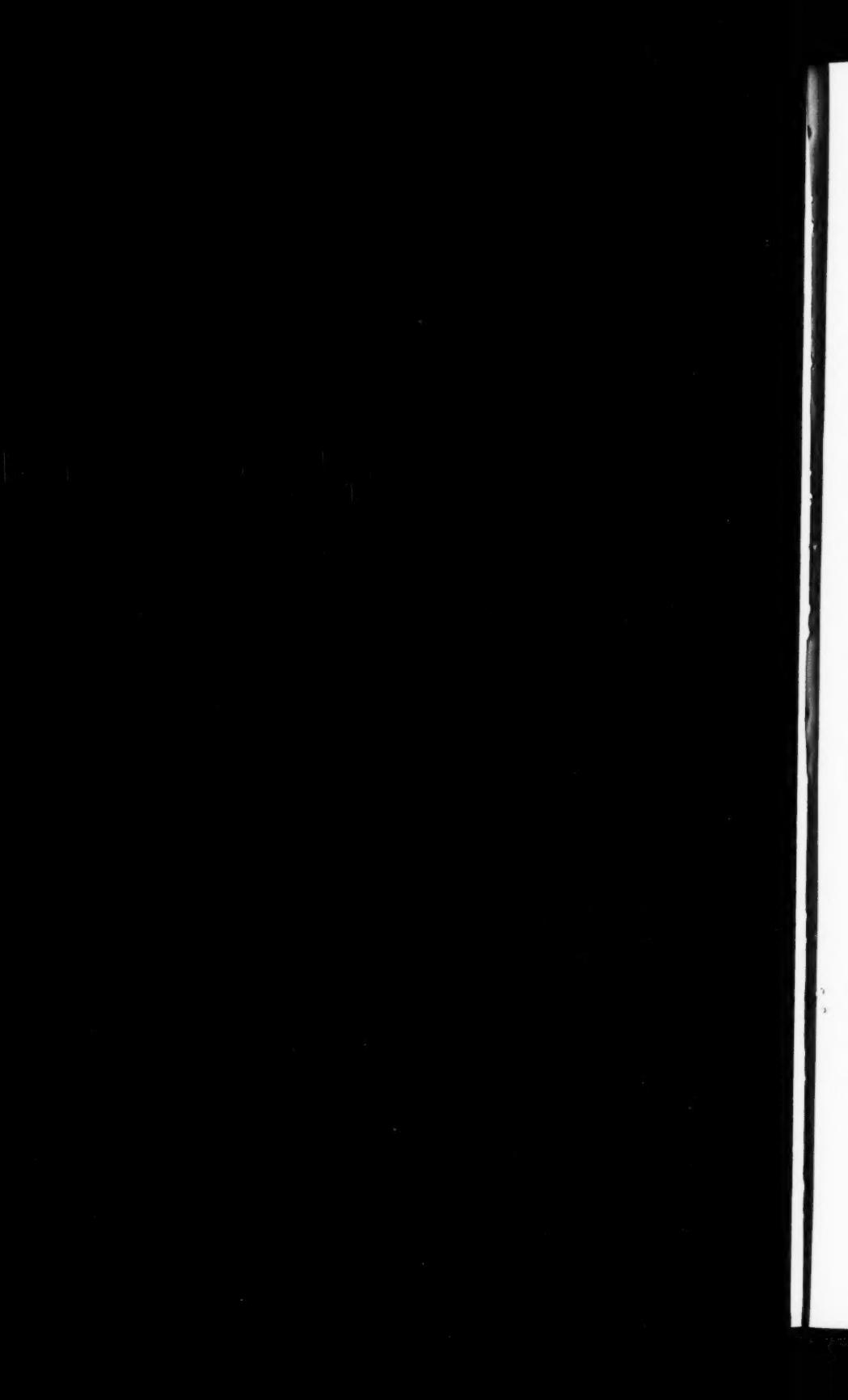
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